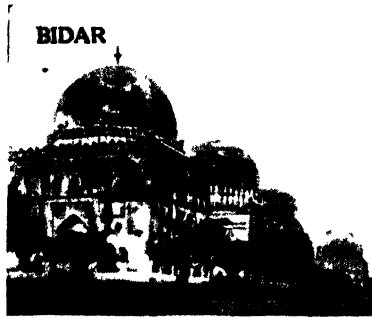








SHARMA : *The Crescent in India*



Monuments of Medieval India

# THE CRESCENT IN INDIA A STUDY IN MEDIEVAL HISTORY

By

S. R. SHARMA, M.A.

Professor of History, Willingdon College, Sangli

Author of *Mughal Empire in India*



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**TO  
ASPIRANTS  
OF  
INDIAN UNITY**

*"The sword of Islam was the Creator's pruning knife which removed the decaying branches and cut back the unfruitful growth of the Tree of Knowledge He had planted in Aryāvarta."*

E. B. HAVELL

## PREFACE

This brief study of Medieval Indian History has been designed to meet the requirements of under-graduates in Indian Colleges. It is to be considered as no more than an Introduction to a subject which has been attracting increasing attention of late in our Universities. The theme is as fascinating as it is vast. At every step the temptation to follow up its divers ramifications has been restrained in order to attain lucidity even at the risk of what scholars might consider a lack of profundity. This dominating desire will also explain the economy of foot-notes. But I have given sufficient references in the text itself to indicate my sources. More detailed documentation for the latter part of this work will be found in my *Mughal Empire in India* of which it is an abridgement. The earlier portion has been written here for the first time. The present volume deals with the history of Islam in India from its first appearance in the eighth century A.D. to the fall of the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century A.D. The background of Hindu India has not been lost sight of. While principally concerned with the political history of the Crescent in India, I have also not ignored its social and cultural aspects. Readers will, perhaps, find that I have essayed interpretations at places which may not be quite in agreement with the views of more profound scholars than myself. But I have written under the conviction that 'History must from time to time be re-written, not because new facts have been discovered, but because new aspects come into view, because the participant in the progress of an age is led to stand-points from which the past can be regarded and judged in a novel manner.' With what result is for others than myself to judge. I shall be satisfied if this study acts as an appetiser.

My indebtedness to the various writers named in the *Books for Further Study* appended to this volume is very great, and I take this opportunity of acknowledging the same. I must also thank my colleagues, Professors V. N. Dhavale, M.A., and B. N. Joshi, M.A., for very valuable assistance in preparing the Index.

Vishrambag,  
September, 1937. }

S. R. SHARMA



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION : DECLINE OF HINDU INDIA

A VERY facile and familiar division of history is that which makes a distinction between Ancient, Medieval and Modern. If the unity and continuity of a people's life is not lost sight of, there should be little objection to this three-fold division in time. Despite the other familiar reference to the *peoples* of India, there is substantial truth in the concept of the fundamental unity of the people of this country as distinguished from the other peoples of our continent and the rest of the world. The people of India, despite the diversity of their racial composition, maintained this unity of their character and individuality intact until the close of what might be described as the Ancient period of our history. In the succeeding age, i.e. the Medieval period, we lost that character for good or evil—it was inevitable—and a process of transformation began which has not yet been completed. It is easier to recognize the factors that brought about this change in our national life than to fix any point in chronology whence the process commenced. If, however, a dividing line must be found, the death of Harsha (647 A. D.) affords us a convenient landmark from which to date the commencement of the new epoch. India up to that date, or to about the close of that century, was characteristically and exclusively *Hindu*, using this term in its most comprehensive sense. Whatever changes took place up to that age were changes in *Hindu* India, which remained *Hindu*, enfolding in its broad bosom such divergent racial elements as Aryan and Dravidian, Scythian and Mongolian, and religious differentiations such as Brahmanism, Animism, Jainism and Buddhism. Hiuen Tsiang's India was of this composite character, but it was quite different from what it has been since. To study the nature and causes of this transformation is the main purpose of this work.

The active agent of this metamorphosis was Islam. Hinduism found in Islam a strange bed-fellow, with a character almost sturdier than its own. The capacity of Hindu society for assimilation of peoples and cultures unlike its own, before the advent of the Muhammadans,

seemed to be infinite. But the Crescent for the first time revealed its limitations. Indeed, for well nigh a millennium, Hindu society threatened to go under. Islam was in the ascendant from the advent of the Arabs in Sind (712 A.D.) to the decline and fall of the Mughal Empire at the death of Aurangazeb (1707 A. D.). Until after the final discomfiture of Alamgir it was not certain that India was not to be *Dar-ul-Islam*. But the Medieval Age in India closed with the certainty that this ancient land was to belong equally to both peoples and faiths, Muslim no less than Hindu. On what terms has not been settled yet.

The impact of these two cultures has created Modern India and its problems. The aggressive European never fully triumphed over purely Islamic countries. No one entirely succeeded in submerging India so long as she remained exclusively Hindu. It will not be unwarrantable, therefore, to attribute the subjection of India to her loss of homogeneity. The prime factor in our altered national composition has been the almost unassimilable racial and religious element introduced by Islam. The history of this impact is to us, therefore, of more than mere scholastic interest. If it is true generally that 'India as she is is a problem which can only be read by the light of Indian history,' it is doubly true of the period which forms the subject of our present study. Only through an unbiased and critical but loving study of how India came to be, 'can we grow to understand what the country actually is, what the intention of her evolution, and what her sleeping potentiality may be.'

Except in India, wherever Muhammadans succeeded in establishing themselves, they transformed society and culture beyond recognition. Islam simply came, saw and conquered. Hindu India was both weak, divided and decadent. And yet, after centuries of continuous fighting, India could not be equally submerged. Paradoxical as it might seem, therefore, India on the eve of the Muslim invasions was both weak and unconquerable. She was politically most vulnerable, but culturally all but impregnable. We shall study the two aspects separately.

#### A. POLITICAL HISTORY

The whole of India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, had owned a single sovereign only once prior to the creation of the Turkish and the British Empires : that was under Asoka (273—232 B. C.).

The other empires of Ancient India, while they enjoyed an undoubted pre-eminence over all other contemporary kingdoms, were never co-extensive with the geographical limits of India. Nevertheless, the country was not defenceless against external aggression during the tenure of such mighty empires like those of the Guptas and Harsha. Kingdoms and empires, no doubt, rose and fell within the country, like waves in the ocean, but the political integrity of India was never permanently impaired by foreign invaders. Such of them as held temporary sway over the north-western regions were soon absorbed within the body politic. But this political vitality was as much due to external circumstances as to internal strength. The Greeks, the Scythians and the Huns were mere oceanic waves breaking on the Indian shore ; they were not tides that had an internal momentum which would have carried them into the heart of the country, flooding its entire being. Such a tide had come only once in the ancient history of India, viz., with the Aryan immigrations. Then was India completely conquered and transformed. Another such human flood was rising at the death of Harsha (647 A. D.). It was in the shape of Islam. We shall gauge its magnitude in the next chapter. Here we must survey the field that was as it were thirsty for the inundation.

There were four zones of political life in India, viz., (1) the Himalayan, (2) the Indo-Gangetic (Hindustan), (3) the Deccan, and (4) Southern peninsular India. Within each of these regions kingdoms rose and fell. At times they invaded one another's spheres of activity, but never attained a stable sovereignty over an area sufficiently large to cast a penumbra of political power on the country as a whole. To realise the exact situation it is necessary to watch the kaleidoscope at work.

### I. The Himalayan States

In the northernmost group were Kashmir, Nepal and Assam.

(a) *Kashmir* : The history of Kashmir as a Hindu kingdom dates from at least the days of Asoka. Its legendary and historical annals may be read in its interesting poetical chronicle, the *Rājataranginī*, composed by Kalhana (Kalyāṇa) in the twelfth century A.D. Several Hindu dynasties ruled over the state in succession down to its conquest by the Muhammadans in 1339 A. D. These being of purely local interest, we might pick out only a few samples of its rulers to show the political character of the kingdom. The domi-

nance of women, court intrigue and palace revolutions fill the annals of Kashmir for the most part. One of its great rulers, of the Karkota family, Muktāpīda (Lalitāditya) defeated and killed Yasovarman of Kanauj about 740 A. D. He also built the great Sun temple of Mārtānd the ruins of which still exist. The Karkota dynasty was displaced by the Utpalas in the middle of the ninth century. Avantivarman (855-83 A. D.) of this dynasty distinguished himself by his great constructive achievements. With the help of his able minister Sūra and his great engineer Suyya, he built new towns, carried out great irrigation works, drained marshes and protected the valley from the perennial danger of avalanches. Modern Sōpur (Suyyapura) commemorates the great builder of Kashmir in the ninth century. Unfortunately, Avantivarman was succeeded, after a civil war, by Śankaravarman (883-902 A.D.) who made himself notorious by his extortionate greed, oppressive taxation and temple looting. After a series of revolutions in which the *tantrins* and *ekāngas* (soldiers and military police) played a prominent part, ultimately a queen, Didda, ascended the throne. She dominated the kingdom for nearly fifty years (958-1003 A. D.) together with her favourites, especially Tunga. The latter is to be remembered for an expedition he led against Mahmūd of Ghazni, though it ended in failure. This is the first reference we have to Musalmans in the history of Kashmir. The Lohāra dynasty, which succeeded the Utpalas, produced perhaps the worst ruler Kashmir ever had, though he bore the great name of Harsha (1089-1101 A. D.). In the estimation of Kalhaṇa, 'cruelty and kind-heartedness, liberality and greed, violent self-willedness and reckless supineness, cunning and want of thought—these and other apparently irreconcilable features in turn display themselves in Harsha's chequered life.' He is rightly styled 'the Nero of Kashmir.' Already Muhammadan infiltration into the kingdom had commenced. Muhammadan contingents participated in the civil strife. The Lohāra dynasty too came to an end with the death of its last ruler, Vantideva, in 1172 A. D. Confusion was worse confounded by a Muslim invasion, during the reign of Suhadeva (1301-20 A.D.). All able-bodied men were carried away as slaves and the Muslims left desolation behind them. After a short interlude of Tibetan rule, Kashmir came under its first Muslim ruler Sāhamera (Shāh Mīr) with the title of Shams-ud-dīn in 1339 A. D. Sāhamera had been an able Muslim in the service of Suhadeva.

(b) *Nepal*: The kingdom of Nepal, on account of its peculiar

isolated position, has played little part in the history of India. Though occasional attempts were made to annex it, even by remotely situated rulers like the Chālukya Vikramāditya VI, the mountain kingdom always retained its independence. Nepal first came into contact with the Muhammadans in the fourteenth century (1320-25 A. D.) under the Tughlaks. Then the little kingdom of Tirhut was destroyed, and its capital, Simraon, was sacked.

(c) *Assam*: Assam, too, on account of its remoteness, does not much concern us. Its ruler Ratnapāla boasted of several victories, counting among them one over Chālukya Vikramāditya VI (1076-1126 A. D.) and another over the Chola Rājendra I (c. 1023 A.D.). Marauding bands of, presumably, Muslims, the Bhāhikas and Taikas, are also mentioned among those defeated by Ratnapāla. But the more definite contact with the Muslims came about in the thirteenth century. In 1205 A.D. Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar led a disastrous expedition into Tibet through Assam. Only a hundred out of the 10,000 escaped with their lives. Assam itself was invaded in 1258 A. D. with no better result. Indeed, even as late as in the days of Aurangzeb, in the seventeenth century, Assam continued to be the Valley of Death to the Muslims. In the words of Mir Jumla, 'Assam is a wild and dreadful country abounding in danger... Fatal to life is its expanse like the unpeopled city of Destruction... In short, every army that entered the limits of this country made its exit from the realm of Life; every caravan that set foot on this land deposited its baggage of residence in the halting place of Death.'

## II. *The States of Hindustan*

Hindustan, or the land enclosed between the Himalayas in the north and the Vindhya in the south, stretching from Afghanistan in the west to Assam in the east, was the home of a congeries of Hindu kingdoms, on the eve of the Muslim invasions. The unbroken flatness of this vast plain and the facilities afforded by its reticulated river system, made conquest an easy job. Hence, the history of North India was for long a chronicle of innumerable states, forming, dissolving, and forming again. Their individual annals are but the alphabet of the language of the political history of the land as a whole; their meaning lies more in their concatenation, than in their isolation. The letters of this alphabet were—Gāndhāra, Sind, Kanauj, Gujarāt, Mālwa, Sāmbhar, Mahoba, Chedi, Magadha, Bengal, Kām-

bhoja and Kalinga. Differently articulated, they read—Brāhmaṇ Shāhis, Rāis, Paramāras, Gurjara-Pratihāras, Chauhāns, Chāndels, Chālukyas (Solānkis), Kālachuris, Pālas, Senas, etc. They all embodied but one idea, "Self-aggrandisement"; and spelt but one way, "RUIN." Let us see how they did this. It is convenient to take them in the perspective of their bearing on the Muslim invasions.

(d) *The Rāis of Sind* : The first Muslim invasion of India was through Sind; its details will follow in the next chapter. At that time Sind was ruled by a Brāhmaṇ dynasty founded by Chach, if Arab chroniclers are to be trusted. According to Hiuen Tsiang, however, who visited Sind in the reign of Chach, he was a Sūdra and a Buddhist. Before him were five kings of the Rāi dynasty who ruled for 137 years.

(e) *The Brāhmaṇ Shāhi of Gāndhāra* : In the Kabul valley, Hiuen Tsiang also found a Kshatriya ruler. The last of that dynasty, named Lagatūrmān, reigned at the end of the ninth century. He was overthrown by his Brāhmaṇ minister named Kallār, who founded a new dynasty to which belonged the famous Jayapāla, Anandapāla and Trilochanapāla, about whom more in the third chapter. We have references to these, in the *Rājatarangīni*, which are confirmed by Muslim chroniclers and the testimony of extant coins. Under pressure of the Muhammadans, Jayapāla appears to have relinquished the Kabul valley and founded his new capital at Bhātinda, in the modern Patiala state, as a better centre from which to defend the Punjab. The Arabs describe him as 'the ruler of Hindustan.'

(f) *The Paramāras of Mālwa* : Originally belonging to Mt. Ābu, the Paramāras under Upendra (or Krishnarāja) conquered Mālwa early in the ninth century A. D. Harshasimha, one of his successors, fought against the Hūṇas and plundered the Rāshtrakūta capital Mānyakheta, in 972 A. D. His son, Munja (Vākpāti II) is said to have conquered the Karnātas, Lātas, Keralas and Cholas, and also to have defeated Yuvarāja, the Kālachuri king of Chedi (modern C. P.). Whatever be the exaggeration in this claim, it is true that Munja successfully invaded the Chālukya territory no less than six times; but when he made one more attempt to cross the Godāvarī, he was captured and put to death by Tailapa II, about 995 A. D. The greatest king of this dynasty, however, was Bhoja, who ruled from about 1010 to 1065 A. D. This is not the place to assess the versatility of his genius. But he shared the urge of the age, namely,

the itch for conquest. He carried on incessant warfare with all the surrounding kingdoms—Chedi, Lāta and Karnāta—and incurred the enmity of all his neighbours. While Bhīma I, Chālukya (Solānki) king of Gujarat, invaded Sind, Bhoja attacked Gujarat; likewise, Bhoja himself, in his turn, was attacked by the southern Chālukya Someshwara II, and put to flight. This is typical of the political dog-fights of the age. Bhoja was involved in fighting to the end of his long reign. Though he appears to have successfully parried the thrusts of the Turushkas during his life time, his successors were too weak to withstand the Muslim inroads of the twelfth century.

(g) *The Solānkis of Gujarat* : The authentic Hindu history of Gujarat may be dated from the seizure of Anhilwārā, in 765 A. D., by Vanarāja of the Chāvda family. The last ruler of this dynasty was slain, in 961 A. D., by his own son-in-law, Mūlarāja, the founder of the new and more famous dynasty of the Chālukyas or Solānkis of Anhilwārā. The greatness of this ruler is much applauded by Jaina historians, but the outward marks of it included the usual wars of aggression and defence, in this instance against Cutch, Kāthiāwār and Ajmer. The martial traditions of Mūlarāja were continued by his successors. Bhīma I's expedition into Sind has already been alluded to above. It was thence that 'the sack of Anhilwārā' became proverbial on account of the annihilation of Bhīma's capital city at the hands of Bhoja's general Kulachandra. But even more famous than the sack of Anhilwārā during this reign was the historic destruction of the temple of Somnāth by Mahmūd of Ghazni, in 1025 A.D. However, the Solānki Bhīma, unlike his epic name-sake, though brave against his Hindu neighbours, took to his heels before the Muslim invader. More about Gujarat and the Solānkis in succeeding chapters.

(h) *The Gurjara-Pratihāras of Ujjain* : The earliest specific reference to the Gurjaras is found in Bāṇa's *Harshacharita* and in the Aihole inscription of Pulakesin II. Both refer to the defeat of the Lātas, Mālavas and Gurjaras. The Pratihāras were one of the clans of the Gurjaras. After the death of Harsha, the Gurjaras established themselves at three centres, viz., Jodhpur, Avanti and Broach. c. 725-35 A. D. the Arabs under Junaid swept over the Gurjara territories, but the Nausāri grants of 738 A. D. mention the ultimate defeat of the Arabs, of which we get partial confirmation in the writings of the Arab historian, Balādhuri. We have also evidence from diverse quarters of the strong position of the Gurjara-Pratihāras



of Avanti (Ujjain) who successfully stemmed the tide of the Mlechhas surging through western India in the eighth century. Their leader was Nāgabhata (725-40 A. D.).

Under Vatsarāja, the fourth king of the Avanti line (775-800 A. D.), a three-cornered struggle began between the Gurjaras, the Pālas of Bengal and the Rāshtrakūtas of the Deccan, for the hegemony of North India. Vatsarāja's son, Nāgabhata II (c. 800-25 A. D.), forming alliances with eastern and western powers, like Kalinga and Sind, got the better of Dharmapāla of Bengal. A numerous Pāla army was defeated at Monghyr, on the one hand, and Chakrāyudha of Kanauj, a feudatory of Dharmapāla, was overthrown on the other. But the Gurjaras, for a time at least, could do little against their southern rivals, the Rāshtrakūtas. Govind III, of the latter dynasty, worsted both Nāgabhata and Dharmapāla, and carried his victorious arms to the foot of the Himalayas. However, days of greater glory were yet in store for the Pratihāras. Under their greatest ruler, Mihira Bhoja, who reigned for nearly fifty years (c. 840-90 A.D.), they once more resolved to conquer the three worlds. Bhoja soon made himself Emperor over all North India, excluding only Sind and Kashmir, with his capital at Kanauj. Though he was an avowed enemy of the Arabs, we have Arab testimony to the magnificence of his cavalry, and the freedom from crime in his vast dominion. But under Bhoja's successors, in the tenth century, the fortunes of the Pratihāras waned. The Rāshtrakūtas once more carried their triumphant arms northward, and Indra III occupied Kanauj for a time. Minor powers and principalities, like the Chāndels, the Chālukyas, and the Chedis, shattered and scattered the great Empire. But however reduced in their imperial power, the Gurjara-Pratihāras continued to resist the Muslim advance into Hindustan until the last decade of the tenth century. In 991 A. D. the king of Kanauj (Rājyapāla) heroically stood by Jayapāla, though only to share in the Hindu defeat, in the great battle of the Kurram valley. Again in the battle of Peshawar, in 1008 A.D., the Gurjaras were on the side of Ānandapāla. But it was increasingly becoming a vain struggle. Mahmūd of Ghazni occupied first Mathura, then Kanauj. Rājyapāla, having to fight simultaneously against a combination of his internal enemies under the leadership of the Chāndels and the Muslim invaders, finally succumbed. His son Trilochanapāla continued the struggle, falling upon Allahabad for a time. Kanauj remained in Hindu hands for another century, un-

der the Gāhadavālas. Then came the Muslim flood.

(i) *The Chauhāns of Ajmer* : The dynasty, to which the famous Prithvirāja belonged, was long ruling over Sāmbhar in Rājputāna and was there known as the Chāhumānus. In the eighth century the Chauhāns appear to have resisted the further advance of the Arabs of Sind. Ajmer was founded at the end of the eleventh century by Ajayadeva of this family. The dominions of the Chauhāns were further extended under Vighararāja, the uncle of Prithvirāja. The exploits of Rāi Pithaura, as the latter is called by Muslim historians, are glowingly described in the *Chānd-rāisa* the popular epic of Rājasthān. His dramatic abduction of Sanjogata, the daughter of Jayachandra of Kanauj, is one of the most popular tales of Hindustan. Of his political adventures the best known are his invasion of the territory of the Chāndels and the defeat of their king Paramardi, and his heroic resistance to Muhammad Ghūri, against whom he won the first battle of Tarāori in 1191 A.D. But in his final engagement at the same place Prithvirāja was not only defeated but captured and executed, while his local enemy Jayachandra stood aloof and chuckled, if he was not actually in league with the Muslims.

(j) *The Gaharwārs of Kanauj* : The villain of the above episode, Jayachandra, himself fell a victim to Muhammad Ghūri's able general Aibak, the very next year (1193 A. D.) after the fall of his son-in-law. The family to which Jayachandra belonged was the Gaharwārs, the Gāhadavālas who had displaced the Pratihāras. Its greatest ruler was Govindachandra (1112-55 A. D.) who successfully defended Benares against the Muslims and took Patna from the Pālas, thus extending his dominion from Kanauj to Bihar. But under his grandson, Jayachandra, the Muslims occupied Benares, destroyed its temples and erected mosques on their ruins.

(k) *The Chāndels of Mahoba (Jejākabhukti)* : Prithvirāja Chauhān's defeat of Paramardi (Parmāl) of this dynasty has already been referred to above : this was in 1182 A.D. The Chāndels of Bundelkhand were a sturdy and intrepid people of Gond race and played an important part in medieval history. They carried on incessant warfare against all their neighbours, the Gaudas, Kosalas, Mālavas, Chedis, Kālachuris and Gurjaras. They had their capital at Mahoba, and Yasovarman of this dynasty (930-50 A. D.) greatly consolidated his power by his conquest of the fortress of Kālinjar. He was also the builder of the great temple of Khajurāho for which

he forcibly carried away a famous image of Vishnu from the ruler of Kanauj. Yasovarman's son, Dhanga, became even more famous. He ruled for fifty years, 950-99 A. D. and was one of the leading Hindu rulers who joined the grand coalition summoned by Jayapāla to fight against Sabuktigin. His son, Ganda, enraged at Rājyapāla's surrender to Mahmūd of Ghazni (referred to above) despatched a formidable force against him and slew the Gurjara prince, in 1019 A. D. The last ruler of any importance of this dynasty was Parmardi or Parmāl already mentioned more than once. He was defeated by Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak, in 1203 A. D., when the fortress of Kālinjar, famous in medieval history, was captured by the Muslims. Its temples were converted into mosques, its vast treasures were looted, and thousands of Hindus taken away as slaves.

(1) *The Kālachuris of Chedi (C. P.)*: These do not merit any elaborate treatment. They were an ancient family ruling over Central India, and fought against Mihira Bhoja of Kanauj, Bhoja of Mālwa, Krishna II Rāshtrakūta, Someshwara I Chālukya, as well as the Pālas and Kalingas, to mention only a few of the best known incidents in their political history. By the close of the twelfth century they became insignificant, being supplanted by the Bāghelas, and finally overwhelmed by the Muhammadans.

(m) *The Pālas and Senas of Bengal*: We need not trace the history of Bengal prior to the creation of the Pāla kingdom by Gopāla about 765-70 A. D. Under its next ruler, Dharmapāla (770-815 A. D.), the kingdom became very strong and aggressive. The triune struggle for hegemony over North India between the Pālas, Rāshtrakūtas and the Gurjaras has already been alluded to. Dharmapāla carried his arms as far as Kanauj and set up Chakrāyudha as its ruler, dependent on himself. But in his rivalry against Vatsarāja and Nāgabhatta II (Gurjaras) Dharmapāla played into the hands of the Rāshtrakūtas. Under Mihira Bhoja of Kanauj, Bengal was invaded and Magadha annexed to the Pratihāra Empire, at the close of the ninth century. Though Bengal recovered much of its lost territory during the period of the decline of the Gurjaras, the Rāshtrakūtas under Krishna II and Indra III, and even the distant Cholas under Rājendra I (1023 A. D.) made further incursions into the rich provinces of north-eastern India. After a partial recovery, about 1020 A.D., under Mahipāla I, Vikramāditya Chālukya invaded Gauda and Kāmarūpa (Bengal and Assam), c. 1044-62 A.D. Apart from these invasions from the south

there were enemies nearer home like the Kāmbhojas in the east and the Gāhadavālas in the west. In the midst of these attacks the Pāla dynasty, becoming weaker every successive generation, at last succumbed to the Muslims, about 1199 A. D.

The Senas were a Karnātak family who must have settled in Bengal during the invasion of that kingdom by Chālukya Vikramāditya. The real founder of Sena power appears to have been Vijayasena, who ruled from 1100-1165 A.D. "In his Deopara inscription he claims that he defeated Navya and Vīra, attacked the lord of Gauda, humbled the king of Kāmarūpa, protected the king of Kalinga, made many lesser rulers captive, and sailed his fleet up the Ganges." Lakshmaṇasena, grandson of Vijayasena, extended Sena dominion to Benares and Prayāga in the west, Kāmarūpa in the east and Puri in the south. By this time the Pālas of west Bengal had been swept away. Muhammad Ghūri had taken Delhi in 1193 and Kanauj in 1194. At the same time Muslim arms were carried further east. The destruction of Benares has already been referred to. Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar, one of Kutb-ud-dīn's lieutenants, advanced rapidly into Bihar, took Nadiya (Lakhnauti) and overthrew Lakshmaṇasena (before 1205 A. D.). The details of this adventure are highly controversial, but there seems little doubt left about the lightning speed with which the Muslim conquest of western Bengal was achieved. In eastern Bengal the progress of Muslim arms was slower. Even then by the middle of the thirteenth century no trace of Hindu rule was left in Bengal.

### *III. The Deccan States*

The skein of South Indian history is not easier to unravel than that of the numerous kingdoms of the north. Here again for the sake of clearness we must make our treatment selective. We shall approach this subject only with a view to appreciate its bearing on the Muslim conquests in the south. The first Muslim to cross the Vindhya was Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, in 1294 A.D., just a hundred years after Muhammad Ghūri's subjugation of North India. By the end of 1312 A. D. the Muslims under Malik Kāfur had penetrated to the extreme end of the peninsula and built a mosque in Madura the ancient capital of the Pāndyas. We shall rapidly sketch the situation as it ripened to this culmination. It is convenient for this purpose to separate the history of the Deccan from that of the southern kingdoms.

To the first group belonged the Yādavas of Deogiri, the Rāshtrakūtas of Mānyakheta (Malkhed), the Chālukyas of Vātāpi (Bādāmi), Kalyāṇi and Vengi, as well as the Kadambas of Banavāsi, the Kākatiyas of Wārangal, the Gangas of Mysore, and the Hoysalas of Dwārasamudra. To the latter group belonged the Pallavas of Kānchi (Conjeevaram), the Cholas of Tanjore, the Pāndyas of Madura, and the Cheras of Malabar.

(n) *The Chālukyas* : The greatest of the early Chālukyas, Pulakesin II, was a contemporary of Harshavardhana of Kanauj. The two great princes practically divided between them the hegemony of North and South India. Pulakesin died in 642 A. D. fighting against his southern rivals the Pallavas of Kānchi. The latter on this occasion destroyed the Chālukya capital Vātāpi or Bādāmi (in the Bijapur district). The kingdom of Vengi (between the Krishna and Godāvārī) was a collateral line founded by Vishnuvardhana, a brother of Pulakesin II. For two hundred years after Kīrtivarman II of Vātāpi, who ascended the throne in 746 A. D., the Rāshtrakūtas of Mānyakheta (Malkhed in Nizām's dominions) eclipsed the Chālukya power. Then the Chālukya kingdom was revived by Taila II in the last quarter of the tenth century (973-97 A. D.). One of his renowned successors, Someshwara I made Kalyāṇi (in Nizām's territory) his capital, whence these later Chālukyas came to be called the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇi (1053 A. D.). As the earlier Chālukyas were engaged in incessant wars with the Rāshtrakūtas and Pallavas, so their later descendants were in ceaseless conflict with the Paramāras and Kālachuris in the north and the Cholas in the south. The military excursions of Vikramāditya VI of this dynasty in North India have already been mentioned. He is similarly said to have carried Chālukya arms to the south against the Cholas and Cheras. Vikramāditya commemorated his victories by beginning a new era—the *Chālukya-Vikrama-Kāla*—in 1076 A.D. and his court poet, Bhillaṇa, immortalised his hero in his celebrated *Vikramāṅkadeva-charita*. But the dynasty with varying fortunes continued only for a little over another century and ended in 1190 A. D.

(o) *The Rāshtrakūtas and Yādavas* : These two dynasties of the Deccan, ruling respectively from Malkhed and Deogiri, being the successive rivals of the Chālukyas, may be dealt with together. Dantidurga Khadgāvaloka (c. 753 A. D.) was the real founder of Rāshtrakūta ascendancy over the Chālukyas. His uncle and successor

Krishna I, the excavator of the great Kailāsa temple of Ellura, in the words of an inscription 'snatched the goddess of fortune from the Chālukya family and made the boar (symbol of the Chālukyas) flee like a timid deer.' The exploits of his grandson, Govinda III (783-815 A. D.) have been more than once alluded to above. He fought against the Gurjaras, Pallavas and the Eastern Chālukyas of Vengi. Another of his celebrated successors, Indra III, also carried his arms to the north contending with the Pālas and Gurjaras for supremacy in Hindustan. But in 973 A. D. the dynasty came to an end, being overthrown by Taila II, the founder of the Chālukya house of Kal-yāṇi.

The Yādavas were originally vassals of the Western Chālukyas. Under Bhillama III, about 1187 A. D., the family assumed sovereign authority. He was also the founder of their new capital city, Deogiri. The Yādavas fought against the Kākatiyas of Wārangal and the Hoysalas of Dwārasamudra who were trying to extend their power in the Deccan. Though successful over these rivals, under Rāmachandra (1271-1310 A. D.) and his immediate successors, the kingdom of Deogiri fell before Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and Malik Kāfur (1294-1312 A. D.), never to rise again.

(p) *The Kadambas, Gangas and Hoysalas* : These three kingdoms of Karnātak also rose and fell during the period of our present survey. The first two had their beginning quite early and continued to flourish till the rise of the greater power of the Hoysalas. The Kadambas ruled over the Kanara and north Karnātak districts while the Gangas ruled over Mysore. Early in the twelfth century (1130 A. D.) Hoysala Vishnuvardhana invaded the Kadamba territory and destroyed its capital cities of Banavāsi and Hangal. The Hoysalas themselves were a comparatively new power. Though they claimed a very ancient lineage, they figure in history only from the commencement of the eleventh century A. D. Then they grew at the expense of the Cholas and Pāndyas in the south, and the Kadambas and Chālukyas in the north. But by the time a real conflict was developing between the two for hegemony over the Deccan, the foreigner was already at their gates. After the fall of Deogiri, Malik Kāfur sacked Dwārasamudra (Halébid in Mysore State), the capital of the Hoysalas, and took its king Vīra Ballala III prisoner to Delhi (1310 A.D.). At the same time was Goa, where the Kadambas were still ruling, destroyed by the Khaljī general. The last blow at the Kadambas of

the Konkan was dealt by Muhammad Tughlak in 1327 A. D. According to Ibn Brattūta, the Muslims were invited to the Konkan by a rebel son of the Kadamba king.

(q) *The Kākatiyas of Wārangal* : The last dynasty we have to notice in the Deccan is that of the Kākatiyas of Wārangal. They really belonged to Telingana or the Telugu districts. Wārangal (in the eastern part of Nizām's dominions) was built by Prolarāja of this dynasty in 1130 A. D. His son Pratāparudradeva I (c. 1163) is said to have conquered the Yādavas and the king of Orissa, whereas, another ruler of the dynasty, Gaṇapati, claims a victory over the Cholas (1199 A. D.). The last but one ruler of the Kākatiya family was the queen Rudramma (1261 A.D.) who, according to Marco Polo, ruled wisely and well. Her successor Pratāparudra II (1291-1330 A. D.) was the last of the Kākatiyas. Before his death, in 1330 A. D., the ubiquitous Malik Kāfur had entered Wārangal. Pratāparudra tried to save himself by offering the Muslim invader a vast quantity of gold and jewellery. But the inevitable happened. Pratāparudra was taken prisoner to Delhi and was enabled to return to his kingdom before his death only as a vassal of the Sultan.

#### IV. *The Kingdoms of South India*

As already stated, to this group belonged the Pallavas of Kānchi, the Cholas of Tanjore, the Pāndyas of Madura and the Cheras (Keralas) of Malabar. Though situated in the extreme south, none of them proved immune to the far-penetrating arms of Delhi.

(r) *The Pallavas* : Obscure in their origin the Pallavas are supposed to have been a dynasty of foreign rulers rather than a tribe of South India. Suffice it for our purposes to note that their kingdom was already a powerful rival to Pulakesin II in the days of Harsha. It was Narasimhavarman the Great (c. 630-68 A.D.) of this dynasty that destroyed Vātāpi, the capital of the Chālukyas and killed Pulakesin II (642 A.D.). He is also said to have repeatedly defeated the Cholas, the Pāndyas and the Cheras. He even successfully invaded Ceylon more than once. The wars of the Pallavas in successive reigns need not detain us. They were waged against the Chālukyas and Rāshtrakūtas in the north, the Gangas in the west, and the Cholas and Pāndyas in the south. The last of the Pallavas was Aparājita. His pretentious name ('the unconquered') was falsified by his defeat at the hands of Āditya I of the Chola dynasty,

and with him ended the Pallava power, at the close of the ninth century.

(s) *The Cholas* : Though the history of the Cholas is very ancient, what is relevant to our study is the revival of Chola power after the victory of Āditya I mentioned above. His son Parāntaka's exploits (907-947 A. D.) may be inferred from his titles, viz., *Maduraiyam Ilamum Kondan*, i.e. conqueror of Madura and Ceylon. His eldest son, Rājāditya, died fighting against Krishna III Rāshtrakūta. The greatest of the Cholas were Rājarāja the great (985-1016 A. D.) and his son Rājendra Gangaikonda (1016-42 A. D.). Under these two rulers the Cholas became not only masters of South India, but carried their arms and established their renown over the banks of the Ganges as well as in Greater India across the seas. Their conquests included the territories of the Pāndyas, Cheras, Simhala, Gangas, Eastern and Western Chālukyas, the Kadambas, Rāshtrakūtas and Kalingas. From the last of these as the base of operations, the Cholas, in Samudragupta fashion, made a *digvijaya* of Bihar and Bengal, turning thence into Burma, the islands of the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Archipelago (Java, Sumātra, etc.). This grand detour was celebrated in the foundation of the new Chola capital, Gangaikonda-Cholapuram. But after all these triumphs the Chola power did not endure. Rajendra Chola died in 1042 A. D. His legacy of Empire was indeed a legacy of wars, perhaps only defensive under his less able successors. By 1117 A. D. the transmarine possessions were definitely lost under Kulottunga I (1070-1118 A.D.). Under Rājādhirāja II and Rājendra III there were civil wars, and rebellions of vassal chieftains. Under these circumstances, outlying powers like the Hoysalas of Dwārasamudra, (e.g. under Someshvara, 1220-35 A.D.), the Pāndyas of Madura (under the three successive Sundara Pāndyas, 1216-75 A. D.) and the Kākatiyas of Wārangal (particularly under the queen Rudramma, 1260-1291 A.D.), made haste to consolidate and extend their own territories at the expense of the Cholas.

(t) *The Pāndyas* : Originally subject to the Cholas (995-1216 A. D.) the Pāndyas recovered their independence under circumstances described above. Māravarman Sundara Pāndya I (1216-39 A. D.) carried fire and sword into the Chola dominion and under his grandson Jātavarman Sundara Pāndya (1251-68 A. D.) Madura reached the zenith of its power. Besides overwhelming the Cholas, Jātavarman appears to have driven the Hoysalas from Kannanur (north of



Srirangam), occupied Kānchi and defeated Gaṇapati the Kākatiya king. He extended his power up to Nellore. His successor Kulashekara (1268-1311 A. D.) conquered Quilon and Ceylon, according to the Buddhist chronicle *Mahāvamsa* (1284 A.D.). But even while Kulashekara was alive civil war ensued between his legitimate son, Sundara, and his natural son, Vira Pāndya. The former, it is alleged, murdered his father and invoked the assistance of Malik Kāfur, the pioneer of Muslim dominion in South India (1310-11 A. D.). Thus ended the glory of the Pāndyas.

(u) *The Cheras* : We have only one more of the ancient Dravidian kingdoms of South India to notice. The period of Chera ascendancy was long anterior to Muslim advance into South India. Its greatest ruler Senguttuvan Chera (2nd century A. D.) belongs half to legend and half to history. One of the Perumals (Cheramān), as the later rulers of Malabar were called, was wrongly believed to have become a convert to Islam and died during his pilgrimage to Mecca. This line of rulers became extinct in the ninth century A. D. and then followed the Kulashekara Perumāls, the ancestors of the present rulers of Travancore. It is interesting to note that Malabar came under Muslim influence long before the days of Malik Kāfur. According to the *Tuhfat-ul-Mujahaddin* of Sheikh Zain-ud-dīn, himself a Malabar Muslim living at the court of Sultan Adil Shāh of Bijapur, the Muslim settlement of Malabar began as early as the days of the Prophet himself. But more authentic history dates it from about the eighth century A.D.

## B. SOCIETY AND CULTURE

The outline of political history given above must enable the reader to visualise the weakness of India during the centuries intervening between the death of Harsha (647 A. D.) and the Muslim penetration to the extreme south of the peninsula (1312 A. D.). Never was India politically more vulnerable than during these nearly seven centuries. There was no single paramount power either in North or South India that could have withstood the invader single-handed. Nor was there any sense of unity that would have brought the innumerable states together even in the face of common danger. North India under the Pratihāras and South India under the Cholas appeared for a time to realise that unity which, had it lasted longer, might have saved the country. But even the success of these two powers

was of an accidental and precarious nature. Their impulse and strength were derived from a Mihira Bhoja or a Nāgabhata, a Rājarāja or a Rājendra, and not from the stabler source of the people. The universal clash of arms that we witnessed was not between people with any sense of territorial patriotism, nor even between followers of conflicting faiths, but always between the loyal or mercenary personal adherents of ambitious monarchs. To appreciate the real character of the period, therefore, we must turn from an account of the rulers to the people, society and culture of the time.

*Two Moulding Forces* : The people *en masse* never act except as they are led. Given effective leadership they are capable of achieving almost anything. This is no less true of democratic than monarchical countries ; no less true about modern than about ancient or medieval times. It is this universal human trait which accounts for the different levels and directions of the same people's achievement under varying circumstances. History abounds in illustrations of this eternal truth. Hence prophets and kings have always found large followings wherewith to found faiths and empires. If faiths and empires have not endured it is because leadership has been defective. In India it is these two forces, Religion and Rulers, that have always moulded the lives and fortunes of our people. We must therefore look deeper into the medieval religions and rulers of India. For the masses, indeed, the rulers were veritable gods on earth ( राजा प्रत्यक्ष देवता ); and what character the rulers bore also determined the character of the people themselves ( यथा राजा तथा प्रजा ). This is more true of India, perhaps, than of any other country ; more true of medieval India than of modern.

*Religion* : 'Religion' is a poor and misleading substitute for what Hindus call *Dharma*. The latter defined the outlook and sought to determine the conduct of every man, woman and child in India during the entire span of human life. It was in accordance with this mysterious urge that kings conducted campaigns, built temples, and patronised the Brāhman ; it was also to satisfy this instinct of *dharma* that women committed *satī* in times of peace and *johār* in times of war. Without an appreciation of this deep-seated and all-embracing element one can never grasp the meaning of medieval life which was different in outlook from our own. There were good kings and bad, just as there were differences in creed, dogma and ritual in different parts of the country or even among different sec-

tions of the people living in a single province. But making allowance for all manner of variations from man to man and province to province, the outlook of Hindu India, from the days of Harsha to those of Sundara Pāndya, from Hiuen Tsiang to Marco Polo, was identical. "With deeds, thoughts and words living beings should do their duty. Harsha has declared that an unsurpassable (mode of) acquiring spiritual merit." So wrote Hiuen Tsiang in the middle of the seventh century. His picture of the great king of Kanauj was the pattern for the succeeding seven centuries. Despite its length, therefore, it is worth citation.

'Prabhākaravardhana was succeeded by his eldest son Rājyavardhana. But when the latter was murdered by Śaśāṅka the wicked king of Karpasuvārṇa in East India, a persecutor of Buddhism,...the statesmen of Kanauj, on the advice of their leading man Bāṇi (or Vāṇi), invited Harshavardhana, the younger brother of the murdered king, to become their sovereign.' Upon this the reluctant prince 'determined to take the advice of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara ('the Beholding Lord'). An image of this Bodhisattva, which had made spiritual manifestations, stood in a grove of this district near the Ganges. To this he repaired; and after due fasting and prayer, he stated his case to the Bodhisattva. An answer was graciously given which told the prince that it was his good *Karma* to become king, and that he should, accordingly, accept the offered sovereignty and then raise Buddhism from the ruin into which it had been brought by the king of Karpasuvārṇa, and afterwards make himself a great kingdom. The Bodhisattva promised him secret help, but warned him not to occupy the actual throne, and not to use the title *Mahārāja*. Thereupon Harshavardhana became king of Kanauj with the title *Rājaputra* and the style *Śālditya* (the Sun of Conduct).'

Starting with this motive, the way Harsha fulfilled his ideal is also characteristic of medieval Hindu kingship: 'As soon as Śilāditya became ruler, he got together a great army and set out to avenge his brother's murder and to reduce the neighbouring countries to subjection. Proceeding eastwards he invaded the states which had refused allegiance; and waged incessant warfare until in six years he had fought the Five Indias. Then having enlarged his territory he increased his army, bringing the elephant corps up to 60,000 and the cavalry 100,000, and reigned in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon. He was just in his administration, and punctilious in the discharge of his duties. He forgot sleep and food in his devotion to good works. He caused the use of animal food to cease throughout the Five Indias, and he prohibited the taking of life under severe penalties. He erected thousands of *topes* on the banks of the Ganges, established Travellers' Rests through all his dominions, and erected Buddhist monasteries at sacred places of the Buddhists. He regularly held the quinquennial convocation; and gave away in religious alms everything

except the material of war. Once a year he summoned all the Buddhist monks together, and for twenty-one days supplied them with the regulation requisites. He furnished the chapels and liberally adorned the common halls of the monasteries. He brought the brethren together for examination and discussion, giving rewards and punishments according to merit and demerit. Those brethren who kept the rules of their order strictly and were thoroughly sound in theory and practice he advanced to the 'Lion's Throne' (i.e., promoted to the highest place) and from these he received religious instruction; those who, though perfect in the observance of the ceremonial code, were not learned in the past, he merely honoured with formal reverence; those who neglected the ceremonial observances of the order, and whose immoral conduct was notorious, were banished from his presence and from the country. The neighbouring princes, and the statesmen, who were zealous in good works, and unwearied in the search for normal excellence, he led to his own seat, and called them 'good friends,' and he would not converse with those of a different character. The king also made visits of inspection throughout his dominions, not residing long at any place but having temporary buildings erected for his residence at each place of sojourn, and he did not go abroad during the three months of the rainy-season retreat. At the royal lodges every day viands were provided for 1000 Buddhist monks and 500 Brāhmins. The King's day was divided into three periods, of which one was given up to affairs of government and two were devoted to religious works. He was indefatigable, and the day was too short for him.'

This picture of a medieval monarch at his best is hard to surpass. Authentic as it is it must serve to give the reader a definite idea of what the better type of ruler in medieval India aimed at and did. Buddhism and Jainism were declining faiths. Other rulers might have subscribed to one or other of the new creeds of Hinduism which were welling up. But the general attitude was that of Harsha. Persecution of the followers of faiths other than one's own was rare. As a rule we find toleration the prevailing attitude. Hence Buddhists, Jainas, Śaivites, Vishnavites, Pāshupatas, Jangamas, Tāntrics, Sun-worshippers, monists, dualists, qualified-dualists, and even heretics and non-believers—all lived in the country without communal clashes. There were often very passionate and heated disputations about spiritual matters and grave challenges by religious preachers and protagonists. But these were more or less of an academic character and rarely went beyond creating a temporary and local sensation. Perhaps occasionally a ruler would become a convert, but he did not seek to convert all his subjects. Patronage was continued on cosmopolitan lines, and *cujus regio ejus religio* was never adopted as a principle by Hindu rulers in medieval times.

The history of religious toleration in pre-Muslim India would make an interesting and instructive study. But it would be too much of a digression to undertake in this context. Like Harsha almost all great rulers of medieval India used to convene parliaments of religions under official auspices. Whatever their personal inclination, kings played the part of impartial judges and patrons of all. Minorities, especially, were accorded an almost paternal treatment. For instance, an inscription of Bukkarāya I of Vijayanagara dated c. 1368 A.D. records an interesting settlement of a dispute between his Vaishnava and Jaina subjects in the following terms :—

‘The king taking the hand of the Jainas and placing it in the hand of the Sri Vaishnavas of the eighteen *nāḍus*, including the *āchāryas* of the places, declared that there was no difference between the *Vaishnava-darśana* and the *Jainadarśana*. . . If loss or advancement should be caused to the *Jaina-darśana* through the *Bhaktas*, the Vaishnavas will kindly see that it is loss or advancement to their own *darśana*. The Sri Vaishnavas will kindly to this effect set up a *śāsana* in all the *bastis* of the kingdom. For so long as the sun and moon endure the Vaishnavas will continue to protect the *Jaina-darśana*. The Vaishnavas and Jainas are one body : they must not be viewed as different.’

Space does not permit our recounting the fuller religious history of the times. But we must not fail to draw at least a brief sketch delineating its main features. Though the decline of Buddhism had commenced even when Hiuen Tsiang visited, that religion found votaries in Bihar and Bengal up to the days of the Pālas and Senas. The great Buddhist academy of Vikramasīla, with its 107 temples and six colleges, was the creation of Dharmapāla (770-815 A.D.). When Bihar and Bengal were invaded by the Muslims towards the close of twelfth century (1197-99 A.D.) the last surviving followers of that fugitive faith were extinguished with the wholesale destruction of their monasteries.

Jainism survived during a longer period, especially in South India. It found patrons in all the principal dynasties of the South. It flourished in the dominions of the Rāshtrakūtas, Chālukyas, Gangas and Hoysalas, until the rise of Vaishnavism and Śaivism, in the days of Vishnuvardhana Hoysala (1100-41 A. D.) and Bijjala Kālachuri (1156-67 A.D.) respectively. Even then it did not completely lose its ground and claims followers in all parts of the peninsula to this day. Kumārapāla of Gujarat (1147-73 A. D.) was its great patron in western India.

Kumārila Bhatta (c. 700 A.D.), Śankarāchārya (c. 800 A.D.), Rāmānujachārya (c. 1100 A.D.), Basaveshwara (c. 1150 A.D.) and Mādhavāchārya (c. 1200 A.D.) were the outstanding religious teachers who were responsible for re-forming the spiritual outlook of Hindu society during the age immediately preceding the Muslim conquest of India. The effect of their teaching cannot be ignored by the historian who attempts to gauge the psychology of the people who were soon to be subjected to the test of a new revolutionary force (viz., Islam). The three great āchāryas and Kumārila and Basava, no doubt, revived Hinduism as a potent faith, but their philosophy bore the deep marks of the faiths they claimed to have destroyed.

The two most noteworthy features of this revived medieval Hinduism were the illusionism (*māyāvāda*) of Śankarāchārya and the *Bhakti* cult of other teachers. The former served only to confirm more deeply the spirit of other-worldliness inculcated by both the Buddhists and the Jains ; the latter engendered an all-confiding belief in sectarianism which, while it divided the people, also expressed itself in a kind of idolatry that soon invited the cupidity of the iconoclastic invaders.

*Architecture* : While religion fostered king-worship, meekness, self-denial, renunciation, and a host of other virtues admired during times of peace and prosperity, it also gave a great impetus to artistic expression of all kinds. More than through other forms medieval Hinduism expressed itself luxuriantly in temple architecture. The Mārtānd Sun temple of Kashmir, the Khajurāho Vishnu temple of Central India, the rich Jaina temples of Mt. Ābu, and the famous Śaiva and Vaishnava temples of South India, particularly those built by the Cholas of Tanjore, the Pāndyas of Madura and the Hoysalas of Dwārasamudra (Halébid and Belūr in Mysore), may be cited as examples. Mahmūd of Ghazni who destroyed the glorious temple of Somnāth was struck with a sense of beauty by the shrines of Mathura and Kanauj though his zeal for Islam did not permit his sparing them through admiration. The Kailāsa temple of Ellura, excavated under Krishna I Rāshtrakūta still evokes the admiration of the world. Princes and peasants had lavished their best gifts on these creations for generations before their fatal endowments attracted the heavy hammers of the greedy iconoclasts. Little did pious and self-complacent India of a thousand years ago dream that its princes and gods would alike prove impotent against a race of more

realistic foreigners. When one reads today the extravagant terms in which the medieval kings were eulogised by courtier-poets, and in which extravaganza royalty itself indulged, one cannot help exclaiming with the psalmist, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!" The following extract, taken at random, from the records of Vishnuvardhana Hoysala (1100-41 A.D.), who, by the way, was only a viceroy under Chālukya Vikramāditya VI, may be taken as a sample of royal modesty compared with other effusions of the age.

'When the great Kshatriya, entitled to the five drums *mahāmandaleshwara* (with numerous other titles), a Bhairava of the last deluge to the Chola race, a royal lion to the elephant Chera, a submarine fire to the ocean Pāndya, a wild fire to the sprouts of the creeper the fame of Pallava, a *śarabha* to the lion Narasimhavarma, his unshaken fame a lamp into which Kālapāla and other kings fall like winged white-ants, the twang of his bow putting to flight the deer the Vanga, Anga, Kalinga, and Simhala kings, Kānchipura resounding with his orders as with the sharp sounds of drums... the wives of hostile kings employed in his house as female servants, squeezing in his hand the southern Madhurāpura, having destroyed Jananāthapura by his general,—the Kānchi-gonda Vikrama-Ganga Vira-Vishnuvardhana-deva, protecting under his sole umbrella the Gangavādi 96,000, the Nolambavādi 32,000 and the Banavāsi 12,000, was ruling the kingdom in peace and wisdom.'

*Literature* : There is one aspect of this poetic license, however, which we must not fail to appreciate. It is the literary mode. Hyperbole is the normal trait of Eastern literature. The tropical luxuriance of Nature must partially account for the wealth of imagination often running riot in our prose no less than poetical works. The break up of imperial India into petty provincial kingdoms narrowed down the range of appreciation. The imperial extravagance of language came to be lavished on the miniature emperors and their diminutive empires. But, at the same time, the shrinkage of empires into kingdoms multiplied the number of patrons and brought them into closer touch with the creative artists. It must also be remembered to the credit of our medieval Hindu rulers that many of them were, not merely familiar with their swords, but equally conversant with the creative pen. Even here Harsha stands as a model. The conqueror of 'the five Indias' was also the author of *Ratnāvali*, *Nāgānanda*, *Priyadarśika*, etc., besides being a patron of literary men like Bāṇa the author of *Harshacharita*, *Kādambari*, etc. We have numerous examples of such a combination of martial vigour and literary taste throughout medieval India. To name only a few : Bhoja Paramāra

of Mālwa, Durvinita Ganga of Mysore, Amoghavarsha Rāshtrakūta of Malkhed, Mahendravarma I Pallava of Kānchi, were all poet-kings ; while the number of those who patronised great writers was legion. Besides the capitals of all the kingdoms and the temples scattered throughout the land, Nālanda, Vikramasila, Benares, Ujjain, and Kānchi were some of the most celebrated centres of learning. Leaving out of our account works of pure literary interest like those of Rājashekhara, Bhavabhūti, Māgha, and Śrī Harsha, and those of philosophic or religious interest like those of Śankarāchārya and Jayadeva, still we have works produced during this period which are of historical value and social importance like *Navasāhasāṅkacharita* of Padmagupta, *Vikramāṅkadevacharita* of Bilhaṇa, the *Rājatarangiṇī* of Kalhaṇa, besides the *Mudrārākshasa* of Viśhākadutta and the *Mitākshara* of Vijnāneshwara. Of a scientific character we have the astromical and mathematical treatises of Bhāskarāchārya, viz. the *Siddhānta-shiromaṇi*, *Līlāvati* and *Bījagaṇita*, and the *Rājamārtāṇḍa* of Bhojarāja ; and medical and chemical treatises like the *Rasārṇava*, *Rasahrīdaya*, *Rasendrachūdāmaṇi*, etc. To add to this vast and varied literature in the classical tongue, vernacular works like the *Chāṇḍ-rāisa* and a host of others in Hindi, Bengali, Marāṭhi, Kanarese, Tamil, etc. would take us beyond the scope of our present study.

*Imperium in Imperio* : We observed at the commencement how Hindu India on the eve of the Muslim invasions was politically vulnerable but culturally all but impregnable. The sketch of political history given above, with its never-ending inter-state wars, must have amply demonstrated the truth of the first remark, namely, that India was internally too much divided and torn up with strife to be able to make a united stand against the foreigner. She did not even appear to have this desire. Politically speaking it is not, therefore, permissible to attribute this singular personal pronoun to the multiplicity of warring kingdoms that comprised the geographical entity India. Was India culturally impregnable ? Though she was politically much divided there is no doubt she had a cultural integrity. From the Himalayas to Cape Comorin there was a unity of civilization that bore the Hindu stamp, leaving ample scope for all individual and provincial variations. To delineate its character adequately would take more than the full extent of this treatise. But what has been already stated about the Religion, Rulers, Architecture and Literature of the age might serve to give an idea of what constituted Hindu India



even during the period of her decline. These features were common to the whole country and refused to collapse with the disintegration of her outward political structure. True to her mystic philosophical conception, of the Eternal Substance enduring behind the Passing Show of innumerable forms, the substance of her national character persisted in spite of the repeated disruption of her empires and kingdoms. What could account for this strange paradoxical phenomenon ?

There was an *imperium in imperio*, a state within a state, that took care of the people and their culture in the midst of invading armies that swept the length and breadth of the land playing ducks and drakes with its princes and principalities. Its rigid vocational caste-system, for the most part, made warfare a game of professionals from which all but the warrior class were religiously excluded. Until at least the advent of Islam the Hindu code of chivalry, which respected the sanctity of non-combatants, was very largely observed in all parts of India, though occasionally we have transgressions like the one recorded in a South Indian inscription (of Satyāshraya at Hottur) which alleges that the Chola army (1007-8 A.D.) 'pillaged the country, slaughtered women, children and Brāhmaṇs, and taking the girls to wife, destroyed their caste.' From the days of Megasthenes to those of the Muhammadans the immunity of the village communities from pillage and destruction in times of war was an established fact. Such dangers to which the villagers were exposed came from robbers and cattle-raiders. Except where anarchy reigned, normally, society was protected by its autonomous institutions which were too deep-rooted to be disturbed by even the chronic instability of kingdoms of the Middle Age. The secret of the preservation of Hindu civilization is therefore to be found in her enduring social structure.

The rigidity of the caste-system is often referred to as one of the causes of our decline. By no means a defensible institution, under modern conditions, it nevertheless made its own contribution to our cultural survival. Fortresses were taken, capitals changed their masters, kingdoms rose and fell, but Hindu society was hardly affected. This inviolability of its main character has been due to two institutions, viz., Caste and the Village Community.

India was, as it were, covered by innumerable circles, some of them concentric and some intersecting. The circle of the village community stood within the larger circle of the kingdom and enclosed

within itself the circles of the various castes. These last were mutually exclusive within the village, but intersected both the circle of the village and the larger circle of the kingdom, being linked up with members of the same caste outside the village and the kingdom. The net-work of castes and villages sustained its balance and remained intact even when the larger circle of the kingdom was broken into or destroyed. The kingdoms were the variables, and villages and castes the constant factors in the Hindu socio-political equation. The mutual exclusiveness of the castes was confined only to inter-marriage and in some cases also to inter-dining. In all other spheres they co-operated and lived an inter-dependent life. Even the lowest of the low had his place defined in the community and each ran his course in the pre-ordained orbit. Rulers of kingdoms passed through varying vicissitudes of fortune but the even tenor of village life was hardly disturbed.

Since the village communities were the repositories and nurseries of our Hindu civilization, it is necessary that we should have a glimpse of their working during the period of our survey. In brief, they were autonomous groups with minimum of dependence upon the central government. Where the latter was benevolent and strong the village community had everything to gain by way of patronage. Where that authority was either weak or indifferent the village had little to fear and little to lose. There was however one other contingency : the king might be both strong and oppressive. There were such wicked rulers as Śankaravarma and Harsha of Kashmir. But they were exceptions and brought about their own downfall.

External defence to the extent it was needed was provided by the king. Internal policing was done by the villagers themselves. There were officers formally appointed by the village Council and paid from the local revenue, taxes being levied for various purposes such as defence, education, sanitation, construction of roads, aqueducts, wells, tanks, temples, etc. Under normal conditions they were munificently endowed by their rulers. We have evidence from inscriptions commemorating the high sense of duty with which villagers in all parts of the country participated in their public responsibilities. To die fighting for the defence of the village was considered a great honour ; we have hero-stones scattered throughout the country bearing testimony to this. To build or endow a temple or contribute towards the creation or maintenance of public

utilities was regarded as a means of earning spiritual merit ( पुण्य ) :

बापीकूपतडागानि देवतायतनानि च ।

पतितान्युद्धरेयस्तु स पूर्वफलमश्नुते ॥

Though such village communities existed in all parts of India, they seem to have been most systematically organized in South India. It is interesting to note that, not only were the various administrative functions distributed among several bodies under the supervision of an elective village *sabha*, but the qualifications of eligible officers were carefully defined and rules laid down for their conduct. For instance, each holder of a share in a Brāhmaṇ village called an *Agrahāra* had a right to a seat in the *sabha*. But he was required to be well versed in the *Dharmaśāstras* and to have a permanent and abiding interest in the village and to be also sound in body and mind. The minimum qualification required for membership, the method of election and the formation of committees in the *sabha* were all defined. Enlightened rulers by their own munificent endowments to educational institutions made it possible for such village republics to function properly. Professor A. S. Altekar has, among other examples, cited the following from an inscription of Krishna III (Rāshtrakūta), dated 945 A.D.

“The college (at Salgoti) was located in a magnificent building built by Nārāyaṇa, a minister of Krishna III. Students from distant countries resorted to it and twenty-seven hostels were necessary to accommodate them. Boarding and lodging was free, 500 acres of land being endowed by the king for meeting those expenses. The provision for the light charges of this big academy was made by another grant of 12 acres ; and the principal was assigned 50 acres by way of remuneration. The inhabitants of the village too were not slow to appreciate the institution ; the institute used to receive from them five coins at the time of each marriage, two and a half at the time of each thread ceremony and one and a quarter at the time of each tonsure. Besides, whenever a feast was given in the village, the host used to entertain as many teachers and students as he could afford to entertain.”

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

570 Birth of the Prophet Muhammad.

622 Hegira (Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina) or commencement of the Muslim Era.

629 Muhammad's return to Mecca ; Hiuen Tsiang started for India.

632 Death of Muhammad ; Abu Bekr first Caliph.

A.D.

- 634 Omar second Caliph.
- 636 Syria conquered by Muslims.
- 637 Battle of Kadessia ; Persian Empire overthrown.
- 638 Jarusalem taken by Caliph Omar.
- 642 Death of Chālukya Pulakesin II.
- 644 Othman third Caliph.
- 645 Hiuen Tsiang's return from India.
- 647 Death of Harsha King of Kanauj.
- 656 Murder of Caliph Othman at Medina ; Ali fourth Caliph.
- 661 Ali murdered ; Muawija first Omayid Caliph.
- 711 Muslim invasion of Spain.
- 712 Arab invasion of Sind.
- 732 Charles Martel hammers Muslims out of France.
- 749-50 Omayids overthrown at Damascus by Abul Abbas first Abbasid Caliph (*Shiah*).
- 786-809 Harun Al-Rashid the Great Caliph at Bagdad.

## CHAPTER II

### THE CRESCENT ON THE HORIZON

#### *The Rise of Islam :*

In contrast to the political weakness of India that we traced in the preceding pages we have here to witness the rise of a mighty power in the West. That power was Islam, the militant faith founded in Arabia by its Prophet Muhammad (570-632 A.D.) in the first quarter of the seventh century, but destined before a hundred years were past to extend over Asia Minor, North Africa, and the Iberian peninsula, in the west ; and Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, and Turkistan, in the east. This mighty crescent lying over the western, southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, possessed such dynamic energy that it seemed only a question of time when it would spread into the other neighbouring countries. Its surging tide was stemmed in Europe at two points : (1) at the battle of Tours (Poitiers) in southern France in 732 A. D. and (2) at Constantinople on the Bosphorus in 717 A.D. Nevertheless, it encompassed in its triumphant march the ruin of two mighty empires—Byzantine and Sassanid—and spread its green mantle over the Semitic, Hamitic, Negro, Iberian, Caucasian, Iranian and Turanian peoples. In the words of the great historian Gibbon, "At the close of the first century of the Hegira (622-722 A. D.) the caliphs (Muhammad's apostolic successors) were the most potent and absolute monarchs of the globe." Though their theocratic empire was soon divided between three rival courts (at Bagdad on the Tigris, Cairo on the Nile, and Cordova on the Guadalquivir), Mecca continued to be its spiritual heart, its perennial fountain of inspiration. Two races determined the character of this colossal movement, viz. the Arabs (Semitic) and the Turks (Turanian). The former shaped its culture and the latter gave it its ruthlessness and energy. In course of time, the other elements in its composite people also began to impart their own characteristics to Islamic civilization. We shall examine the nature of this new force in humanity at a later

stage. Here we must confine ourselves to its outward expansion towards India.

*From Damascus to Bagdad :*

Of the three countries of Islamic power mentioned above, viz. Bagdad, Cairo and Cordova, only the first is relevant to our history. The Caliphate of Bagdad had its immediate predecessor in that of Damascus. Muhammad, the Prophet, had been succeeded by his father-in-law Abu Bekr ; he was the first Caliph. His successor, Caliph Omar (634-44 A.D.), made most of the conquests of Islam, viz., in Syria, Egypt and Persia. As the empire of the Caliphs expanded, their capital was moved from Medina to Damascus. For nearly a hundred years under the Omayyids, as the successors of Omar were called, Damascus reigned over the Islamic world. It was during the reign of the Omayid Caliph Walid I (705-14 A. D.) that the Arab invasion of Sind (711 A.D.) took place. At the same time, Muslim arms were carried northwards to the borders of China. But the Caliphate of Damascus soon fell a prey to the evils bred by luxury and autocracy. In 750 A. D. their rivals, the Abbasids, brought about a revolution. The last of the Omayyids was hunted down and killed in Egypt. The maker of this revolution, Abul Abbas, became the founder of the new line of Caliphs. In the words of H. G. Wells, Abbas "began his reign by collecting into one prison every living male of the Omayyad line upon whom he could lay hands and causing them all to be massacred. Their bodies, it is said, were heaped together, a leathern carpet was spread over them, and on this gruesome table Abbas and his councillors feasted. Moreover the tombs of the Omayyad Caliphs were rifled, and their bones burnt and scattered to the four winds." After this the Abbasids changed their capital from Damascus to Bagdad (762 A.D.).

The motive for the above *coup de main* was the traditional feud between the *Shiahs* and the *Sunnis*. The Omayyids were *Sunnis* and the Abbasids *Shiahs*. Briefly, the conflict had arisen between two rival parties in the apostolic succession commencing with Ali the fourth Caliph. The first three Caliphs held their position through the people's choice. Ali being the Prophet's son-in-law (by his marriage with Muhammad's daughter Fatimah), the Shiahs recognised him and his lineal descendants as the only true Caliphs. The Sunnis recognized the first three elected Caliphs as well. The flag of the

Sunnis is white ; that of the Shias is black. The Abbasid Caliphate of Bagdad became famous under Al-Mansur (754-75 A. D.) and Harun-al-Rashid (786-809 A. D.) of *Arabian Nights* fame. Bagdad under them became a renowned centre of learning, art and science. But in the eleventh century it fell into the hands of the Seljuk Turks and in the thirteenth was destroyed by the Mongols.

*On the Indian Horizon :*

The Arabs were the carriers of Indian trade with the West for centuries before they became Muslims. It is, therefore, to be expected that their conversion would not be without effect upon India. They appear to have led their first expedition to Thānā (near Bombay) on the west coast as early as 636-7 A. D. But it was not much of a success. The next attempt was made in 644 A. D. by land through the Mekran coast into western Sind. It was sent by Caliph Othman as a reconnoitring expedition, and its leader Hākim bin Jabala al-'Abdi reported, "Water is scarce, the fruits are poor, and the robbers are bold ; if a few troops are sent they will be slain, if many, they will starve." After this disheartening survey no further experiments appear to have been made until the Arabs were provoked in 711 A. D.

A party of Arabs was returning from the Malabar coast with gifts for Caliph Walid I at Damascus and his viceroy Hajjaj at Basrah. It was plundered by pirates near the mouth of the Indus and the Arabs were detained at the port of Debal (Karachi). A demand for their restitution was made to the ruler of Sind, but it was met with evasion. Hence a punitive expedition was at once despatched by Hajjaj, but it failed. Another was sent in its wake with no better results. Finally, in the autumn of 711 A.D., the enraged governor of Irāk despatched his own nephew and son-in-law, Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad bin Kāsim, with a mightier force consisting of 6000 Syrian horse, an equal number of Irāki camels, and 3000 Bactrian baggage animals. Imād-ud-dīn was a youth of seventeen summers, but his success showed that he was a brilliant commander.

*The Fall of Brāhmaṇābād :*

It will be remembered that Sind was at this time under a Brāhmaṇ ruler of the Chach dynasty which had come into power by the overthrow of Rāi Sāhasi only a generation earlier. The rapidity with which Sind was conquered by Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad, as we shall

presently see, seems quite natural in the light of the internal weakness of the country. On the showing of the *Chach-nāmā*, there was not much love lost between the rulers and the ruled in Sind at this time. The Brāhmaṇs were not merely usupers but also ruled like usurpers. The basic population was mostly Buddhist by religion and Jat by race. The Chach family was therefore alien both in race and religion ; what made matters worse was that it was also alien in spirit.

Chacha, the founder of the dynasty, was only a minister of Sāhasi. On the latter's death he usurped the throne and married the widowed queen. This was evidently not liked by the subjects. But the Brāhmaṇ adventurer ruled them with an iron hand. The Jats were forbidden to carry arms, ride saddled horses, wear silks, and subjected to other humiliations. They were to walk always bare headed and bare footed and carry with them dogs to indicate their presence. Chacha soon made himself master over all the surrounding country. The petty rājas and chieftains were all subdued. He also tried to cultivate relations with established ruling families by marrying his daughter to a prince of Kashmir.

Chacha's successor was his brother Chandra, after whom came Dahir (Chacha's son) who ruled when the Arabs invaded. Even then the usurpers had not been well established. Discontent among the subjects was rendered worse by domestic dissension in the Chach family. This was the unhappy state of the ill-assorted kingdom of Sind when it was faced with the crisis brought on by Dahir's tactlessness in dealing with the legitimate grievance of the Arabs. The invaders were further assisted by an Arab contingent which appears to have been already in Dahir's service, but refused to fight against their own co-religionists. In contrast to this, Dahir's own countrymen, the discontented Jats, made common cause with the enemy to overthrow the oppressor.

We need not be at pains over the details of the conquest. The port of Debal was the first to be attacked. Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad had reinforcements from the governor of Mekran, Muhammad Hārūn, who brought with him five catapults which served for medieval artillery. The temple stronghold of Debal was soon reduced and its sacred flag brought down. "700 beautiful females under the protection of Buddha" were among the prizes won by Imād-ud-dīn. The male population above the age of seventeen, having refused to be circumcised, were put to the sword ; the rest were enslaved. A



mosque took the place of the demolished temple.

One of the first dispatches of Imād-ud-dīn to his uncle Hajjaj, according to the *Chach-nāmā*, reads : "The nephew of Raja Dahir, his warriors and principal officers have been dispatched, and the infidels converted to Islam or destroyed. Instead of idol-temples, mosques and other places of worship have been erected. *Khutbah* (Friday prayer) is read, the call to prayer is raised, so that devotions are performed, at stated hours. The *takbir* and praise to the Almighty God are offered every morning and evening."

In acknowledging this, Hajjaj wrote back : "God says, 'Give no quarter to infidels, but cut their throats.' Then know that this is the command of the great God. You should not be too ready to grant protection, because it will prolong your work. After this give no quarter to any enemy except those who are of rank."

The Buddhist samani (*śramaṇas*) of Nerun and Sehwan, the next to feel the weight of Arab arms, escaped destruction through abject surrender. These fortified towns were betrayed by the casuistry of the samani who seem to have argued, "We are a priestly class ; our religion is peace. According to our faith, fighting and slaughter are not allowable." So they advised surrender.

The work of the invaders being thus facilitated, they turned to Rāwār and Brāhmaṇābād, where the Arabs met with the most determined resistance. At the former place, however, a calamity familiar in Indian warfare put the army into fright : Dahir seated on an elephant was carried against his will into the river Indus by the frightened animal. Though the king saved himself and continued to fight mounting a horse, the army thought its leader lost. At Brāhmaṇābād, which was bravely defended by Dahir's son Jai Singh, the struggle was likewise cut short by the betrayal of one of the Sindi generals. The conquest of Aror, Multan and other places followed (713 A. D.).

One relieving feature in this sorry tale was the valiant though unavailing stand made by the women, under the leadership of Rāṇī Bāi. They resisted bravely when their husbands died, and finally, in Rajput fashion, committed *johār* in their thousands. Two beautiful daughters of Dahir, it is related, had been sent to the Caliph through Hajjaj among the choicest first gifts by Imād-ud-dīn. They avenged themselves on their captor by inciting the enraptured Hajjaj (or Caliph) to pass a fatal sentence on Imād-ud-dīn on a charge of initial rape. Whatever be the causes that led to the ungrateful execu-

tion of the young Arab general it is true that he met a tragic end. What is of far greater interest to us, however, is the state to which Sind was reduced by this first triumph of the Crescent in India, and its consequences on subsequent history.

*Political Aspects of the Arab Episode :*

Though Sind continued to be always under the Muslims until its annexation to the Delhi empire, scholars have repeatedly denied the lasting character of the Arab conquest. Tod, the renowned historian of Rājasthān, put forward an exaggerated claim which has been emphatically repudiated by *The Cambridge History of India* (following Lane-Poole) in these terms :—

“Of the Arab conquest of Sind there is nothing more to be said. It was a mere episode in the history of India and affected only a small portion of the fringe of that vast country. It introduced into one frontier tract the religion which was destined to dominate the greater part of India for nearly five centuries, but it had none of the far-reaching effects attributed to it by Tod in the *Annals of Rājasthān*. Muhammad b. Qāsim never penetrated to Chitor in the heart of Rajputāna ; the Caliph Walid I did not ‘render tributary all that part of India on this side the Ganges’ ; the invader was never ‘on the eve of carrying the war against Raja Har-chund of Kanauj,’ much less did he actually prosecute it ; . . . nor was the whole of northern India, as Tod maintains, convulsed by the invasion of the Arabs. One of these, as we have seen, advanced to Adhoi in Cutch, but no settlement was made, and the expedition was a mere raid ; and though the first news of the irruption may have suggested warlike preparations to the princes of Rājasthān their uneasiness cannot have endured. The tide of Islam, having overflowed Sind and the lower Punjab ebbed, leaving some jetsam on the strand. The rulers of states beyond the desert had no cause for alarm. That was to come later, and the enemy was to be, not the Arab, but the Turk who was to present the faith of the Arabian prophet in a more terrible guise than it had when presented by native Arabians.”

Without contesting the main thesis of Sir Wolseley Haig, and without subscribing to Col. Tod’s either, it is necessary for us to assess the positive aspects of the wide implications of the Arab conquest. Here we need take into consideration only *what was actually done* by Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad and his successors and not what the intrepid Imād *might have done* had he not met with his tragic fate.

Imād-ud-dīn’s sudden removal from the scene did indeed cut short a career that had made a promising beginning for Islam in India. The Caliph Walid I, under whom this episode took place,

also died in 715 A.D. Under his son Umar II (717 A.D.) Jai Singh, the son of Dahir who had fought so valiantly against the Arabs only five years earlier, became a convert to Islam. But even his conversion did not save him. Junaid, the governor of Sind under Caliph Hishām (724-43 A.D.) invaded his territory and killed him. Then followed the Abbasid revolution at Damascus (750 A. D.) and the creation of the new Caliphate of Bagdad. Sind was not immune to its repercussions. Already the grip of the Caliphs had loosened under the later Omayyids. The governors and chiefs of Sind proved themselves more and more recalcitrant. By 871 A. D. the authority of the Caliphs in Sind was virtually extinguished, and Arab chiefs finally established two independent principalities : one in Mansūrah or Sind proper, up to Aror on the Indus, and the other comprising modern Multan. The allegiance to the Caliphate that the successors of these chiefs protested to Mahmūd Ghazni during his raids in the tenth century was merely a diplomatic pretence.

#### *Arab Administration :*

Three years (711-13 A.D.) were too short a period in which to create anything like an Arab administrative system in Sind. They were also years of continuous fighting. Nevertheless, Imād-ud-dīn established a sort of rough and ready machinery wherewith to replace the system that was destroyed, and also as a means of securing the fruits of the conquest. It must be remembered that he had brought with him but 15,000 men and might have received reinforcements of about 5000 more. At the end of the three years (711-13 A. D.) perhaps not more than half the number were left, soldiers and camp-followers included, after paying the toll of war and sickness. Besides, they had brought no women with them ; at least not in sufficient numbers. Hence such arrangements as Imād-ud-dīn could make were bound to be in the nature of a compromise.

In the first flush of victory at Debal he had acted quite like a Muslim conqueror in an infidel country. The law of Islam was unambiguous in this respect. Apart from the followers of the True Faith, there were only two classes of people : (1) those who were sharers in Revelation, like the Hebrews and the Christians, and (2) those who were intolerable infidels and idolaters. The former could be suffered to practise their own religions provided *jizya* was exacted from them. But the choice for the latter could only be between con-

version to Islam and death. Hajjaj under whose orders Imād-ud-dīn was acting was a stern and uncompromising bigot. Naturally, there was here no room for compromise. Hence the vanquished at Debal were given the customary choice, and on their refusal, according to Ferishta, those of seventeen years of age and above were put to the sword and the rest were enslaved. The women and treasures, such as fell into the conqueror's hands, were appropriated. Islamic tradition demanded their being shared among the faithful. A fifth was sent to the Caliph through Hajjaj and the remainder distributed among the soldiery. Out of the limited troops at the commander's disposal, 4000 had to be spared for the retention of Debal, while war was carried into the enemy's country with the remnant of the army. Here were natives ready to help the invader, but they could not all be forcibly converted and yet expected to serve. Under these unique circumstances the practical wisdom of Imād-ud-dīn prevailed. The infidels had to be at least partially tolerated. The privileges of the Zimmi (Hebrews and Christians) were extended to the Hindus and Buddhists of Sind. Similar concession had been shown elsewhere to the Zoroastrians and the Māgi, and the exigencies of the situation in Sind at least made its adoption seem justifiable. In the opinion of Sir William Muir *the conquest of Sind therefore marks a new stage in Muslim policy.*

Enslavement of those who were captured in war and the building of mosques on the ruins of temples demolished was carried out up to a stage. Then the conqueror discovered that the way of conciliation and compromise was more paying, if Sind was to be at all permanently secured. The infidels were taken into both civil and military employ, their women were taken to wife, lands were restored to some of the native chieftains without the obligation to become converts, idolatry was connived at, even some of the four-armed idols already appropriated, instead of being destroyed, were despatched to Hajjaj as curios along with other gifts. Especially, in the organisation of the revenue administration did Imād-ud-dīn find the Hindus indispensable. The new policy was proclaimed in the following terms : "The temples shall be inviolate like the churches of the Christians, the synods of the Jews, and the altars of the Magians—subject to the *jizya* and other taxes."

Sir Wolseley Haig speaks of Hajjaj as "a bitter persecutor" who "knew nothing of the lax interpretation which tolerated idolatry on

payment of a tribute." But even Hajjaj appears to have relented, if the *Chach-nāmā* is to be believed. In reply to the appeal for toleration made by the people of Brāhmaṇābād, which was referred to him by Imād-ud-dīn, Hajjaj declared, "As they have made submission and have agreed to pay taxes to the Caliph, nothing more can be properly required from them. They have been taken under our protection and we cannot, in any way, stretch our hands upon their lives or property. Permission is given them to worship their gods. Nobody must be forbidden or prevented from following his own religion. They may live in their houses in whatever manner they like." After this way was open for Imād-ud-dīn to say, "Deal honestly between the people and the Sultan, and if distribution is required, make it with equity, and fix the revenue according to the ability to pay. Be in concord among yourselves and oppose not each other, so that the country may not be distressed."

The booty which had come to the conqueror was by no means small. The ancient practice of hoarding, wearing costly jewellery, and lavishing gold and silver on temples, provided a splendid quarry. The *Chach-nāmā* records one instance where a temple yielded over thirteen hundred *maṇs* of gold. This was partly sent to the Commander of the Faithful and partly distributed. In another case 12 *dirhams* of silver were given to each head of the entire population as compensation for property looted. Nevertheless the taxation was fairly heavy, especially for the infidels. The annual revenue in the aggregate for Sind and Multan is said to have been 11,500,000 *dirhams* (£ 270,000).

First came the *jizya* which was levied according to three grades (1) 48 *dirhams*, (2) 24 *dirhams*, and (3) 12 *dirhams*. Evidently the distinction was made on the basis of the social status of persons and their capacity to pay. Women, children, and those unable to work, were exempted from the *jizya*. Then came the land tax (*khirāj*) which was also graded according to produce : (1)  $2\frac{1}{5}$  of wheat and barley in lands watered by public canals ; and (2)  $1\frac{1}{4}$  in others. In the case of garden produce like grapes and dates,  $\frac{1}{3}$  was the state demand, and  $\frac{1}{5}$  on fish, wine, pearls, etc. There were tax-free gifts of land made to the soldiery, but subject to military service and the payment of *sadgah* (religious alms). But all these burdens were liable to enhancement under more exacting circumstances. Indeed, as Elliot has pointed out, "With the progress of luxury the wants of government

and its servants increased, and their zeal diminished ; so that it became requisite to employ more people, and to give them higher pay. Consequently, the taxes were gradually increased, till the proprietors and working classes were unable to pay them, which led to continual changes in the government."

The Arab conquerors of Sind treated the natives much as the Spartans did the Messenians. They devoted themselves almost exclusively to the cultivation of arms while the helots worked for them in the fields. Nay worse ; while the Arabs in later years took more and more to trade and luxuries, the old humiliations which the Jats had suffered at the hands of their Chach kings,—viz. prohibition to ride, wear silk, head-gear and foot-wear, and obligation to carry dogs with them etc. continued. Hence, so far as the people were concerned, what the Arab conquest achieved was only a substitution of one kind of oppression for another. Perhaps, for the converts to the new faith, times had changed for the better ; to others for the worse.

#### *Why Arabs Failed :*

In the final analysis the Arab adventure in India must be accounted a failure : not because it achieved nothing, but because it "led to nothing," of course in the political sense. It is only in this and this sense only that Lane-Poole's verdict must be understood. It was indeed "an episode in the history of India and of Islam, a triumph without results." That is to say, the permanent conquest of India by Muslim arms had to be attempted afresh, from another quarter and by another people—Turks and not the Arabs. The Arabs who had conquered Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Carthage, Spain and Portugal, Turkistan, Persia and Afghanistan prior to the conquest of Sind, cried halt at the threshold of India. Why ? The causes are certainly worthy of investigation. From the point of view of India, too, it was an "episode" "without results" because India never seemed to take heed despite the lesson of Sind. She was as unprepared and pre-occupied three centuries later, when the Iconoclast hammered her gods out of existence, as Sind had been when the first Muslim mosques were built on the ruins of Hindu and Buddhist temples.

But the activities of the Arabs in Sind were not so isolated as they have been usually supposed. The identity of places like Quinnauij and Odipur mentioned by Arab chroniclers might be disputed by scholars. Yet the following references are not of a negligible character :—

Cutch, as admitted by Sir Wolsley Haig, was raided by the Arabs in the eighth century A. D. though not with a view to annexation or settlement. "For the most part," *The Cambridge Shorter History of India* observes, "the Arab governors of Sind maintained friendly relations with the Maitrakas of Valabhi in Gujarat, and with the Chāvadās and Chālukyas who succeeded them." (p. 205). In another place (p. 123) the same history points out that "The Lāta Chālukya, Pulakesin, records his defeat of an Arab army which had reached his lands, and Nāgabhata, the founder of the Gurjara power, is recorded to have turned back a Mlechcha invader, perhaps the expedition of Junaid already mentioned. The Gurjaras certainly formed a bulwark against the Arab advance, and for this reason the Arabs cultivated the friendship of the rival clan of the Rāshtrakūtas of Mānyakheta (the Balhāras)." We have testimony of the inscriptions as well as the writings of Arab travellers of the ninth and tenth centuries to confirm these widespread Arabian contacts. Al-Masūdi (912-16 A.D.) attests to the power and prestige of the Gurjara-Pratihāras under Mihira Bhoja and his successor Mahipāla (840-940 A. D.), and refers to a Muslim settlement of over 20,000 people at Chaul. Sulaiman (851 A.D.) describes Amoghavarsha (815-78 A.D.), whom he calls Balhāra, as one of the four great princes of the world, the other three being the Caliph of Bagdad, and the Emperors of China and Roum (Constantinople). He also adds, "there does not exist among rulers, a prince who likes the Arabs more than Balhāra, and his subjects follow his example." Among the victories of Nāgabhata II (c. 800-25 A. D.) of the Gurjara family is mentioned one against the Turushkas (Arabs); and the Nausāri grants of 738 A.D. record the victory of Lāta Chālukya Pulakesin in Gujarat, already mentioned, though the Arab historian Balādhuri claims that the invaders conquered Jurz (Gurjara) and Barus (Broach), but were less successful against Uzain (Ujjain) and Maliba (Mālwa). "The power that checked the eastward advance of the Arabs," according to Sir Wolsley Haig, "was the Avanti dynasty of Rājputāna and western Mālwa, whose descendants were destined to play a great part in the history of northern India." To these we might add the testimony of the Muslim tradition regarding the Arab settlements on the Malabar coast referred to in the first chapter. Apart from the unverified statements of Zain-ud-dīn regarding the conversion of Cheramān Perumāi, during the life-time of the Prophet, we

would refer here to a more plausible tradition regarding the origin of the Navāits, Māplas and Labbais of South India. It is related by Thurston in his *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (IV, 199), that the ancestors of these South Indian Musalmans were refugees from Irāk exiled by Hajjaj of Basrah, early in the eighth century A.D. But perhaps more convincing evidence is that of the tomb of one Ali ibn Udthormān bearing an epitaph dated 166 Hegira (788 A.D.) referred to by Mr. Innes in the *Malabar Gazetteer*. According to Nelson, the Muslims first established themselves in Madura in 1050 A. D. Thus it would appear that before the Turkish invasions began in the tenth and eleventh centuries, Indians in most parts of the country had come into varied contacts with the Arabs. It is not likely, therefore, that they could have remained ignorant of happenings in Sind during the period intervening between Imād-ud-dīn Muhammad bin Kāsim and Mahmūd Ghazni. If, in spite of this, Indian rulers encouraged the Arabs, it was either on account of political reasons, as in the case of the Rāshtrakūtas, or on the score of commercial advantages. For instance, according to Wassāf, from Fars alone 10,000 Arab horses were annually imported into India. They cost 2,200,000 *dinars*. As Mr. Titus observes in his *Indian Islam*, "The Arab traders enjoyed the favour of the Hindu rulers, whose states profited extensively from the mercantile relations thus established ; and as a result, no hindrances were put in the way of their proselytizing. In fact, the native converts are known to have been treated with the same respect and consideration as the foreigners, even though they may have been recruited from the lowest classes of society." Two instances may be here cited from Arab writers themselves in confirmation of the kind of treatment accorded to Musalmans by Hindu rulers : Idrisi, in the eleventh century, noted that the Arab traders who frequented Anhilwārā in large numbers "are honourably received by the king and his ministers, and find protection and safety." M. Ufi records that, when the Muslims at Cambay were attacked by the Hindus, Siddh Rāj (1094-1143 A. D.) punished his own offending subjects and subsidised the Musalmans in building a mosque by way of compensation. It is all the more surprising, therefore, that the Arabs should have failed in spite of such a favourable congregation of circumstances.

Elphinstone attributed the impermanence of the Arab regime to three causes : (1) the expulsion of the Arabs by the Sumera Rajputs ;



(2) the existence in India of "a powerful priesthood, closely connected with government, and deeply revered by their countrymen ; and a religion interwoven with the laws and manners of the people, which exercised an irresistible influence over their very thoughts ; and (3) "even the divisions of the Hindus were in their favour : the downfall of one rāja only removed a rival from the prince who was next behind ; and the invader diminished his numbers, and got further from his resources, without being able to strike a blow which might bring his undertaking to a conclusion." In the opinion of Lane-Poole, "The more obvious explanation of the Arab's failure is found (4) in the as yet unbroken strength of the Rajput kings on the north and east, and (5) in the inadequate forces dispatched by the Caliphs for so formidable a project as the conquest of India... (6) The province was not only imperfectly subdued, (7) but extremely poor, and the Caliphs soon abandoned it in all but name as too unremunerative to be worth maintaining." To this catalogue of apparent causes on the Indian side must be added the more real causes that were sapping the vitality of Arabic Islam at its very root. At first came (8) the struggle for the Caliphate itself which resulted in the overthrow of the Omayyids by the Abbasids. The work of conquest begun in India under the auspices of the former sustained a sudden shock of revolution almost in the same generation. Its reaction in India was seen in the wholesale supersession of officers of the old regime by the devotees of the new. (9) Then came the very destructive grandeur of the Commander of the Faithful under Harun-al-Rashid, when the Empire of the Caliphs "lost touch with everything original and vital in Islam ;" and "speculative philosophy and high-living" took the place of "Koranic orthodoxy and Arabian simplicity." "The solitary bond which could have held the empire together, sternness and plainness of the Moslem faith, was completely neglected by both the Caliph and his advisers" (Sir Mark Sykes, *The Caliph's Last Heritage*, cited by H. G. Wells). (10) After this the Islamic Brotherhood was rent by factions racial, religious and political, when a wave of nationalism was fast overtaking the world. The Arabic Caliphate soon fell before the Turks, and Karmatian and other heretics flocked to the Muslim Cave of Adullam, viz. Sind.

*The Conquerors Conquered :*

India to-day is the biggest Islamic country in the world. In the province of Bengal alone there are more Muslims than in Arabia, Tur-

key and Persia put together. Yet are these Muhammadans a minority in this country, there being four Hindus to every Musalman. This after at least a thousand years of determined Muslim rule (712-1712 A.D.) accompanied by incessant proselytizing activity spread over a longer period. It is a unique phenomenon in human history which cannot but challenge thought for explanation. In the face of this we cannot blame the Arabs for failure in their half-hearted experiment in Sind which escaped even their nominal control after 160 years (711-871 A.D.).

Even up to 871 A.D., when Sind virtually slipped out of the hands of the Caliph, it had not become an Arab province. We have noted to what extent the needs of the situation had softened the initial zeal of the conquerors. There were hardly any reinforcements of Arabs to create a permanent settlement. Such as remained were like islands in the sea. The true Arabs who had been placed in charge of the scattered fortifications in the country, were marooned among the infidels and soon became denationalised. They had not come to Sind as pioneers of civilization ; they were merely the sword-arm of a militant faith. There was hardly any culture in them. Hence they could destroy, but not build. The Arabs were intellectually and emotionally sharp, but excepting poetry they had no arts to speak of, not even the art of building up an enduring state. As Sir John Marshall has pointed out, "the Arabs themselves possessed little or no genius for the art of building, and, if their places of worship were to be as attractive as those of rival creeds it was indispensable that they should impress into their service the builders and artists of the newly conquered countries." That was how the so-called Saracenic architecture was evolved. From India, therefore, the Arabs took away more than the wealth they had taken in war. "It was India, not Greece," as Havell puts it, "that taught Islam in the impressionable years of its youth, formed its philosophy and esoteric religious ideals, and inspired its most characteristic expression in literature, art, and architecture." The cultural treasures of India that we briefly indicated in the first chapter were the richest plunder that the Arab invaders got. They laid their hands quite freely on these in all parts of India while they got the chance. Even in the decadent province of Sind there was sufficient to take the captor captive. In the opinion of Goldziher, the Buddhist monks from Sind (whom Jāhiz of c. 866 A.D. calls *Zindig* monks) 'did not appear on

the Moslem horizon in any theoretical way alone.' As early as the days of the Abbasid Caliphate they 'were a factor of practical importance to the adherents of Islam, just as in earlier times the wandering Christian monks had attracted attention in Syria.' Secondly, Buddhist and other Indian works were rendered into Arabic, either directly from the Sanskrit or from Persian translations. During the Caliphate of Al-Mansur (745-75 A. D.), for example, the *Brahma Sīdhānta* and *Khanda-Khādyaka* of Brahmagupta were translated from Sanskrit into Arabic by Fazāri with the assistance of Indian scholars. According to Tabari, Caliph Harun-al-Rashid was cured of an obstinate malady by an Indian physician. Lastly, *zuhd* or asceticism 'which arose in opposition to legal Islam,' appears to have been advocated by such teachers as Abūl-Atāhiyah (748-825 A. D.) who was revered as 'an example of a highly honoured man: "the king in the garments of a beggar . . . it is he whose reverence is great among men." 'Is he not the Buddha?' asks Goldziher.

Sind was Hind in miniature. The annals of the Arabs in that province were the epitome of the fortunes of Islam in India. The Crescent on the horizon was indeed destined to rise to the zenith of the Imperial sky, but it was to remain only a crescent and not the full moon.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
637	Arabs in Persia.
650	Islam reaches the Oxus.
664	Arabs convert 12,000 Hindus in Kabul.
713	Arab conquests extend to the Sea of Aral and the Jaxartes.
725-40	Arabs in Gujarat and Mālwa.
750	Abbasids overthrow the Omayyid Caliphate at Damascus.
788	Earliest dated (166 Hegira) Muslim tomb found in Malabar.
850	Amoghavarsha Rāshtrakūta described by Arab traveller (Sulaiman) as one of the four great rulers of the world. Rāshtrakūtas friendly towards Arabs.
871	Sind slips out of the hands of the Caliphs.
840-940	Gurjara-Pratihāras (Mihira Bhoja and Mahipāla) stem Arab inroads.
950	Bhima (Brāhmaṇ Shāhi), grandfather of queen Didda of Kashmir, rules over Kabul. Jayapāla who fought Ghazni was Bhima's successor.
950-99	Dhanga, ruler of Chāndels (Mahoba), joins Jayapāla's confederacy.

## A.D.

- 958-1003 Didda and her favourites rule over Kashmir.  
 961 Solānki usurpation at Anhilwārā (Gujarat).  
 962 Alptagin establishes himself at Ghazni.  
 972 Harshasimha of Mālwa plunders Rāshtrakūta capital (Mānya-kheta).  
 975 First clash between Hindu Kabul and Muslim Ghazni.  
 977 Sabuktagin succeeds at Ghazni.  
 985-1016 Rājārāja Chola rules over South India.  
 991 Jayapāla's confederacy overthrown in Kurram valley by Sabuktagin.  
 995 Munja of Mālwa killed during his sixth invasion of Chālukya territory.  
 997 Mahmūd succeeds Sabuktagin in Ghazni.  
 1001 Mahmūd's first invasion of India.  
 1008 Anandapāla defeated at Peshawar.  
 1010-65 Bhoja the Great King of Mālwa : wars against Chedi, Lāta (Gujarat), Karnātak, etc.  
 1023 Rājendra Chola I invades Bengal, etc.  
 1025 Somnāth plundered by Mahmūd Ghazni.  
 1044-62 Chālukya Vikramāditya invades Bengal, etc.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ICONOCLAST IN INDIA

#### *End of the Arab Adventure :*

After Sind and Multan, it was the turn of the Punjab to become a Muslim province. This time it was no punitive expedition like that of the Arabs, but a plundering raid by a Turkish adventurer. Though Sind and Multan continued to be under the Muslims until the next invasion from the north-west, there were no fresh conquests following those of Imād-ud-dīn. Besides, Imād-ud-dīn was not a condottiere acting on his own wild impulse, but represented the established authority of the Caliph, the supreme head of the Islamic world. Mahmūd Ghazni (997-1030 A. D.), whose exploits we are to deal with in this chapter, invaded India successively no less than seventeen times, on his own behalf, established a dynasty which ruled over the Punjab for over 150 years (1030-1186 A. D.), and finally led on to immediate successors in conquest who kept up the continuity of Muslim dominion in India. Like Babur in later times, or perhaps more like Nādir Shāh, Mahmūd had a career outside India which is of no less interest than his doings in this country. The Arabs in the eighth century simply broke the ice, whereas Mahmūd Ghazni opened up India to the Islamic flood from Transoxiana which was already beating on the shores of the declining Caliphate of Bagdad. In order the better to understand the full meaning of the Ghazni raids it is necessary to survey the conditions across the Hindu-kush.

The Arabs had reached Persia as early as 632 A. D., the year of the Prophet's death. They defeated and killed the Sassanian Emperor Rustam at the battle of Kadessia, 637 A. D., and by the middle of the century (650 A. D.) extended the rule of the Crescent up to the Oxus. About fifteen years later (664 A. D.) they invaded Kabul and made 12,000 converts, though the country could not be conquered on account of the strong position of its infidel rulers. Who these were we shall presently consider. Finally, about the period of the conquest of Sind, the Arabs also crossed the Oxus river, took Samarkand

and Bukhara, subdued Khwarizm on the Aral lake, reduced the kingdom of Ferghana, and extended Arab rule up to Mt. Imaus and the Jaxartes (713 A. D.). For well over a century after this the Caliphate enjoyed the luxury, power and prestige of these far-reaching conquests. Then came the inevitable decline referred to in the previous chapter. Elphinstone has well depicted the stages of its fall. The spirit of the Caliphs was gradually transformed. From 'fanatical missionaries' they became 'politic sovereigns, more intent on the aggrandisement of their families than the propagation of their faith; and by the same degrees they altered from rude soldiers to magnificent and luxurious princes, who had other occupations besides war, and other pleasures as attractive as those of victory. Omar set out to his army at Jerusalem with his arms and provisions on the same camel with himself; Othman extinguished his lamp, when he had finished the labours of the day, that the public oil might not be expended on his enjoyments; Al-Mahdi, within a century from the last named Caliph, loaded 500 camels with ice and snow; and the profusion of one day of the Abbasids would have defrayed all the expenses of the four first Caliphs.' While luxury and fratricidal wars were sapping the Caliphate at its core, a new force was rising within the Empire which was soon to undermine its very existence. That force came from the Turks. With their advent the Arab adventure came to an end.

#### *The Rise of the Turks :*

The Turks were a people altogether different from both the Arabs and the Persians. The primitive simplicity and vigour of the Arabs of the desert peninsula at first yielded to the magnificent autocracy and ease of the more cultured Persian. Then in the next stage the Turks turned the faith and fortunes of Islam in an altogether new direction. The Arab had led it to Cordova, and the Iranians to Bagdad; the Turks took it to Delhi. The conversion of Transoxiana led to the conversion of Islam itself. Where the genuine fervour of the original protagonists had failed in the course of less than two centuries (711-871 A. D.), the fanatical zeal of callow converts was to endure beyond the utmost dreams of Hajjaj and Imād-ud-dīn. The fate of India was being decided beyond the Hindu-kush when during the ninth and tenth centuries A. D. the Turks tilted the scales against their masters at Bagdad and Bukhara, creating independent

principalities of their own. The founders of these kingdoms in the Persian and Afghan dominions of the Caliphs were Turkish slaves but destined to revive and extend the power of the Crescent and enslave the vast infidel populations of India. A series of accidents deflected the ferocious, greedy and fanatical Turks into the valley of the Indus whence they were lured into the richer plains of Hindustan. The first of these happenings was in the kingdom of Kabul.

*The Retreat of Brāhmaṇ Shāhi :*

An allusion was made above to the conversion of 12,000 people to Islam, in 664 A. D., during one of the early incursions of the Arabs into the Kabul territory. We attributed the comparative ill-success of Muslim advance in this direction to the strength of the Kabul rulers. Though different surmises have been made about the nationality of these rulers, some thinking them to have been Persians and others Turkish, we have plausible grounds to believe that they were Hindus.

Buddhists existed in large numbers in this region since the days of Asoka and Kanishka. When Hiuen Tsiang visited the country it was ruled by a Kshatriya prince. According to Al-Biruni, this line of kings, known as the Shāhi dynasty, counted sixty rulers, and the last of them, called Lagatūrmān, was overthrown by his Brāhmaṇ minister at the close of the ninth century A. D. Al-Biruni's account finds confirmation both in the coins of the Brāhmaṇ kings named by him and in the independent account given by Kalhaṇa in the *Rājataranginī*. In the light of this multiple evidence, about 950 A.D. Bhīma, the grandfather of Queen Didda of Kashmir, was ruling over Kabul. His successor was Jayapāla whose memory deserves to be cherished as the first Hindu king who struggled heroically against the Turkish flood surging into Hindustan. Despite the support that the Brāhmaṇ rulers of Kabul received from their relatives, the rulers of Kashmir, they could not long hold out against the Ghaznavids in the Kabul valley and had to fall back on Bhātinda (in the Patiālā State) to organise a better defence.

*The Kingdom of Ghazni :*

Lane-Poole has characterised the southerly migration of the Turks as 'the master-movement in the Muhammadan empire in the tenth and eleventh centuries.' The effeminate Caliphs had first used

them as praetorians ; ' but it was introducing the wooden horse into the Muslim Troy.' They soon became masters of the Caliphs, acquired control over the provinces, and dominated the Empire from Egypt to Samarkand. One of the Turkish officers, Alptagin (or Alp Tegin), with a couple of thousand followers established himself in the fortress of Ghazni (Arabic *Ghazna*, Persian *Ghaznin*) in the heart of the Afghan mountains (962 A.D.). It is remarkable how this little stronghold, in the course of a generation or two, became the seat of a mighty Empire extending from Lahore to the borders of Bagdad, and from Sind to Samarkand. This was the work of two redoubtable warriors, Sabuktagin, the slave of Alptagin, and his son Mahmūd. The former succeeded his master in 796 A. D. and ruled for twenty years ; the latter for thirty-three years, 997-1030 A. D. " Sabuktagin was the first Muslim who attempted the invasion of India from the north-west." But his more famous son, Mahmūd, made himself easily the foremost ruler of his age in the Islamic world. And what is more important for us, he also determined the future of India. While his prestige and power were fed from the spoils of this country, during his life-time, the last of his successors, when hounded out of his home by the new Afghan power of the Ghūrīds, about 1150 A.D., was to find asylum in the land his great ancestor had plundered.

#### *Early Encounters :*

A new broom, it is said, sweeps well. So did Sabuktagin. Under the impulse of both his newly acquired power at Ghazni and the religious frenzy of his fresh converted race, the slave-king struck right and left. Kabul, being so dangerously near to Ghazni could hardly escape his attention. In a few ill-matched engagements the Hindus got the worst of the situation and Jayapāla, as we saw, withdrew into the Punjab. According to Sir Wolseley Haig, the Hindus were the aggressors. After Alptagin, during the reign of Pīrāi (972-77 A. D.) he says, the first conflict between the Hindus and Muslims took place, " the former being the aggressors. The rājā of the Punjab, whose dominions extended to the Hindukush and included Kabul, was alarmed by the establishment of a Muslim kingdom to the south of the great mountain barrier and invaded the dominion of Ghazni, but was defeated." However, we cannot forget that three centuries earlier (in 664 A. D.) the Arabs had encroached into the kingdom and converted 12,000 of its inhabitants. The struggle had since then been continued



down the centuries, and the alleged Hindu offensive was only the last of a series. It must be remembered to the credit of the Indian rulers of Kabul that they had manfully struggled through three centuries (664-977 A. D.) against a power that had already submerged Persia and Turkistan. In 986 A. D. Sabuktagin invaded Kabul and carried off much booty and many captives. Again two years later he repeated his exploits and compelled Jayapāla to cede Kabul and much other territory besides. But Sabuktagin never crossed the Indus. This task was left to his more intrepid son.

### *Mahmūd of Ghazni :*

Mahmūd ascended the throne of Ghazni on the death of his father (997 A. D.) but after a brief war of succession with his brother Ismail who was defeated and imprisoned for the rest of his life. This was an evil augury for one who was to be the first Muslim king of Hindustan, but it was too common a feature in the history of Islam to attract attention. Mahmūd, born on 1st November 971 A. D., was twenty-seven years of age when he became king in 998 A. D. Already he had been governor of Khurasan for four years since its acquisition in 994 A. D. Within a year of his accession Mahmūd subdued Sistan and got from the Caliph of Bagdad, Al-Kādir Billāh, a robe of honour and letters patent formally conferring on him the sovereignty over Afghanistan, Sistan and Khurasan, besides the titles *Yamin-ud-Daulah* and *Amin-ul-Millah*. On this solemn occasion Mahmūd took the sacred vow to wage war (*jihād*) on the infidels and lead an annual expedition into India to destroy idolatry. But owing to a rebellion in Khurasan he could not commence his great series of raids into Hindustan until two years later.

### *Iconoclastic Expeditions :*

The character rather than the number of Muhmud's Indian expeditions is important for understanding the history of the Crescent in this country. The number and frequency of the raids only throw light upon the tireless energy of the invaders, while their easy success affords a commentary upon the state of Hindu India. The motives as well as the circumstances of the first expeditions (1001 A.D.) may be best gathered from Utbi, Mahmūd's court historian.

'Sultan Mahmūd,' he writes in his *Tarikh-i-Yamini*, 'at first designed in his heart to go to Sijistan, but subsequently preferred engaging previously

in a holy war against Hind.' Then he distributed arms and called a council 'in order to secure a blessing on his designs of exalting the standard of religion, of widening the plain of right, of illuminating the words of truth, and of strengthening the power of justice.' Afterwards he marched towards India 'in full reliance on the aid of God, who guiding by His light and by His power, bestowed dignity upon him and gave him victory in all his expeditions.'

On reaching Peshawar Mahmūd 'received intelligence of the bold resolve of Jaipāl, the *enemy of God*, and king of Hind, to offer opposition, and of his rapid advance towards meeting his fate in the field of battle.'

The precautions taken by Mahmūd at this stage were an indication of his superior generalship which was bound to triumph against the valiant but ill-assorted army of Hindustan. He 'took a muster of his horses and of all his warriors and vassals from those in whose records it was entered, and then selected from among his troops 15,000 cavalry men and officers, all bold, and *strictly prohibited those who were rejected and not fit or disposed for war from joining those who had been chosen* and who were like dragons of the desert and lions of the forest.'

As against these, Jayapāla's forces numbered 12,000 cavalry, 30,000 infantry, and 300 elephantry. While this already vast host was awaiting further reinforcements, the invader forced action by taking the offensive, believing as Utbi records, 'Often-times a small army overcomes a large one by the order of God.' The result was that 'swords flashed like lightning amid the blackness of clouds, and fountains of blood flowed like the fall of setting stars. The friends of God defeated their obstinate opponents and quickly put them to a complete rout. Noon had not arrived when the Muslims had wreaked their vengeance on the infidel enemies of God, killing 15,000 of them, spreading them like a carpet over the ground, and making them food for beasts and birds of prey.'

Jayapāla, his chief officers, and relatives were taken prisoners, 'and being strongly bound with ropes were carried before the Sultan like as evildoers on whose faces the fumes of infidelity are evident...and will be bound and carried to hell. Some had their arms forcibly tied behind their backs, some were seized by the cheek, some were driven by blows on the neck.'

The 'friends of God' were not unmindful of the gold. So 'the necklace was taken off the neck of Jaipāl, composed of large pearls and shining gems and rubies set in gold, of which the value was 200,000 *dinars*; and twice that value was obtained from the necks of those relations who were taken prisoners or slain...God also bestowed upon his friends such an amount of booty as was beyond all bounds and calculation, including 500,000 slaves (evidently captured after the battle from the surrounding country), beautiful men and women.'

After this 'splendid and celebrated action' which 'took place on Thursday, the 8th of Muharram, 392 H.' (27th November 1001 A. D.)

the Sultan returned ; ' for the Almighty had given them victory over a province of the country of Hind, broader and longer and more fertile than Khurasan.' Comments are needless. But the psychological reactions on the two parties must not be missed.

Jayapāla was ransomed for another 25,000 *dinars* besides valuable hostages surrendered. But he could not suffer himself to survive the shock of this humiliation. To be defeated was an accident of war ; he had won and lost battles valiantly fought in the past. But to have been taken captive by the Mlechcha and treated in the manner he was by Mahmūd was worthy of only one *prāyaschitta* in the code of his country and that he paid willingly. He perished on a self-kindled pyre.

On Mahmūd himself and his co-religionists the effect was marvellous as might be expected. The easy victory redoubled their self-confidence while the booty whetted their appetite for more. To these allurements religion gave a justification by blessing the whole enterprise as *jihād* against the infidels.

#### *War on Heresy :*

Another aspect of the Ghazni raids may be noted at this stage. Sind and Multan were already Muslim provinces, but as stated previously they had become an asylum for all kinds of heretics. Of these the Karmatians were perhaps the most hated. They were a sect founded by Hamdān Karmat and were contemptuous towards orthodox Islam. They had gone to the extent of invading Mecca and carrying away the Black Stone of Kaaba and other holy relics. Abdul Fatah Daud, the ruler of Multan, was a heretic of this order ; hence in Mahmūd's eyes worthy of chastisement even like the infidel idolaters. In 1004-5 A. D., therefore, while Mahmūd led an expedition to Bhīrā, on the left bank of the Jhelum, he also intended to conquer Multan. But Ānandapāla, son of Jayapāla, stood in his way. Nevertheless Mahmūd, the invincible, triumphed over all. Bhīrā was captured, Ānandapāla's army was scattered, and 20,000 *dirhams* were levied from Multan as a contribution 'with which to requite their sins.' Then the invader returned to Kabul leaving his Indian conquests in the charge of Nawāsā Shāh (Sevakapāla), a converted Hindu.

#### *A National Challenge :*

This experiment, however, did not prove successful, for Nawāsā

turned truant and Mahmūd had to come down again (1008 A.D.). 400,000 *dirhams* was the penalty the recalcitrant convert had to pay for his abjuration of Islam. By that time Daud of Multan and Ānandapāla had also joined together like Rāṇa Sanga and Hasan Khān Mewāti against Babur five centuries later. A formidable coalition was formed which the Rājas of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinga, Kanauj, Delhi, and Ajmer also entered.

According to Ferishta, they 'now considered the expulsion of the Muhammadans from India as a sacred duty. Ānandapāla himself took the command and advanced to meet the invader...Troops of the idolaters daily increased in number and aid came to them from all sides...The Hindu females on this occasion sold their jewels and sent the proceeds from distant parts to their husbands, so that they being supplied with all necessaries for the march might be in earnest in the war. Those who were poor contributed from their earnings by spinning cotton and other labour. The Sultan perceived that on this occasion the idolaters behaved most devotedly and that it was necessary to be very circumspect in striking the first blow.'

Mahmūd changed his strategy to meet the situation. Far from taking the offensive, as he had done against Jayapāla eight years earlier, he occupied an entrenched position in the plain of Peshawar and allowed the enemy to do their worst. But in spite of the Sultan's precautions,

Ferishta continues, 'during the heat of the battle, 30,000 infidel Khokārs, with their heads and feet bare and armed with spears and other weapons, penetrated on two sides into the Muhammadan lines, and forcing their way into the midst of the cavalry, they cut down men and horses with their swords, daggers and spears, so that in a few minutes they slaughtered three or four thousand Muslims. They carried their success so far that the Sultan, observing the fury of these Khokār footmen, withdrew himself from the thick of the fight that he might stop the battle for that day.' Other accounts suggest that he even contemplated retreat. But the oft to be repeated mishap of Indian armies in those days took place as in the case of Dahir before the Arabs. The elephant upon which Ānandapāla rode, 'becoming unruly from the effects of naphta balls and the flight of arrows, turned and fled. The Hindus, deeming this to be the signal for flight on the part of their general, all gave way and fled, so that 8,000 Hindus were killed in the retreat. Thirty elephants and enormous booty fell into the hands of the pursuers, with which they returned to the Sultan.'

So ended the best organised and most determined and stupendous national effort ever made by medieval Hindu India against the foreigner. Encouraged by this piece of extreme good luck, Mahmūd advanced further into Hindustan.

*The Harvest of Gold :*

All had been hitherto tentative. Perhaps only a game of chance. The Indian expedition was almost winter sport. When conditions in the home provinces permitted the diversion, the Turk would descend into the plains of Hindustan. Here it was not so cold in the winter. Spring and summer at home would be more enjoyable with the spoils of the infidel country gathered during autumn and winter. The uprooting of heresy and the destruction of idolatry were also good for 'the health of the souls' of 'the friends of God.' But the defeat of the national coalition at Peshawar in 1008 A.D. opened up a new chapter in the Odyssey of Mahmūd. Thereafter he was definitely in search of the Golden Fleece.

Nagarkot (1009 A.D.), Thānesar (1014 A.D.), Mathura (1018 A. D.), Kanauj (1019 A. D.), and Somnāth (1025 A.D.), are letters of gold written on the tablet of Mahmūd's avaricious heart. He gloated over their treasures, and in the invective of an embittered poet :

The King of Khorasan saw in a dream  
 Mahmūd, the son of Sabuktagin,  
 Dead for this hundred years and more ;  
 His head and his heart, his arms and his thighs,  
 Dissolved in dust ; and *only his eyes*  
*Moved in their sockets, and saw*  
*His gold*, his empire, and everything  
 He loved, in the hands of another King.

With the plunder of the ancient temple of Nagarkot (Kangra), in 1008 A.D., the tiger tasted human blood. He did not seem to be satiated until he had despoiled Somnāth (1025 A. D.). Then destiny called him to Ghazni.

Mahmūd was a seasoned soldier. Fear found no place in his heart. Yet after Jayapāla, the Brāhmaṇ ruler of the Punjab, who fought in the spirit of a Kshatriya, Mahmūd found no foeman worthy of his steel among the rulers of the land. His army scored through the kingdoms of Hindustan 'like a comb through a poll of hair.' "Forts and cities surrendered as the great Sultan passed by ; abject chiefs placed their followers at his disposal. He fought when necessary, but more often triumphed by mere prestige." The whole country seemed to be paralysed after Peshawar. If there was no good fighting to be had among princes, to keep up the high spirits of his ruddy warriors, there was plenty of gold in the temples to excite their

cupidity. The holy game of destroying idol temples would enable them to serve both God and Mammon at the same time.

In temple after temple the same tale unfolded itself. "The Hindus saw the enemy coming like a swarm of locusts, they opened the gate out of fear and 'fell on the earth, like sparrows before a hawk, or rain before lightning.'" At Nagarkot, in the estimates of Utbi, 'the treasures were laden on the backs of as many camels as they could procure, and the officers carried away the rest. The stamped coin amounted to 70,000 royal *dirhams*, and the gold and silver ingots amounted to 700,400 *mans* in weight, besides wearing apparel and fine cloths of *Sus*, respecting which old men said they never remembered to have seen any so fine, soft and embroidered. Among the booty was a house of white silver, like to the houses of rich men, the length of which was thirty yards and the breadth fifteen. It could be taken to pieces and put together again. And there was a canopy, made of the linen of Rüm, forty yards long and twenty broad, supported on two golden and two silver poles which had been cast in moulds.'

Nowhere else did Mahmūd display more deliberate and atrocious vandalism than at Mathura and Brindāvan. To admire, appreciate and then destroy is worse than never to have admired at all. Neither Alaric the Goth, nor Attila the Hun, nor even the Norman bandit Robert Guiscard, who sacked Rome in 1084 A.D. in league with the Muslims, indulged in such wanton crime against humanity and civilization. Even when the Caliph Omar destroyed the ancient library of Alexandria he did so out of an utter lack of appreciation of its treasures. Hence Mahmūd's egregious conduct at Mathura is without a parallel in history. Utbi's description of it makes further condemnation superfluous.

When Mahmūd reached Mathura, writes his own court historian, 'he saw a city of wonderful fabric and conception, so that one might say this is a building of paradise, but its accidents or qualities could only come by the aid of the infernals and an intelligent man would hardly receive favourably the account of it . . . Around it . . . they had placed one thousand castles built of stone which they had made idol temples. . . . And in the midst of the city they had built a temple higher than all, *to delineate the beauty and decoration of which the pens of all writers and the pencils of all painters would be powerless*, and would not be able to attain to the power of fixing their minds upon it and considering it. *In the memoir which the Sultan wrote of this journey he thus declares that if anyone should undertake to*

*build a fabric like that, he would expend thereon 100,000 packets of a thousand dinars, and would not complete it in 200 years, with the assistance of the most ingenious architects.'* Then he goes on to describe the five idols of pure gold, each 'of the height of 5 cubits in the air' and on one of which was a jacinth 'such a one that if the Sultan had seen it exposed in the *bazar*, he would have considered as underpriced at 50,000 *dinars*, and would have bought it with great eagerness.' Upon another idol was a sapphire 'of one solid piece, of azure water, of the value of 400 fine *mis-kals*.' From the two feet of a third idol alone they obtained 400,000 *mis-kals* of gold. The idols of silver 'were a hundred times more, so that it occupied those who estimated their standard weight a long time in weighing them.' They devastated the entire city and moved on to Kanauj.

Kanauj was to medieval Hindu India what Pātaliputra was to ancient and Delhi to Muslim India. It was the imperial capital of Hindustan since Harsha moved from Thānesar. The great Gurjara-Pratihāras also ruled from this centre. The spoliation of this city by Mahmūd should have, therefore, virtually meant the establishment of the Ghazni empire in India. But it was no more significant than the later sack of Delhi by Timūr and Nādir Shāh. The iconoclast was more intent on plunder than building up Crescentdom in India. That task was left to his Afghan successor Muhammad Ghūri (1163-1206 A.D.). Meanwhile,

Kanauj bowed low before the blast  
In patient deep disdain ;  
She let the legions thunder past,  
And plunged in feuds again.

The exploits of Nagarkot, Thānesar, and Mathura were repeated. Rājyapāla, the Pratihāra king of Kanauj, submitted. The seven forts of the city were captured in a day. Its '10,000 temples' were looted and destroyed, and Mahmūd marched off to Ghazni with plunder valued at 3,000,000 *dirhams*, together with 55,000 slaves and 350 elephants.

The effect on the world of Islam was tremendous. It was greater and farther reaching than that to be produced later when Babur distributed his Indian spoils with a lavish hand among all his coreligionists. We shall estimate it finally when we have described Mahmūd's *magnum opus* the plunder of Somnāth (1025 A.D.). Before this, however, we must take a glimpse of Hindu India at this critical stage.

#### *A Glimpse of Hindu India :*

Mahmūd had already led several expeditions into the country, but

the Hindus seemed to think with the cynic that 'History teaches but one lesson, namely, there are no lessons to be learnt from History.' If Al-Biruni, a contemporary, about whom more later, is to be trusted, Anandapāla after his own defeat wrote to Mahmūd, "I learn the Turks have rebelled against you. If you wish I shall come to you or send my son with 500 horse, 1,000 soldiers and 100 elephants. *I have been conquered by you and therefore wish that another man should not conquer you.*" Anandapāla's son, Trilochanapāla nevertheless, appears to have fought against Mahmūd being assisted by the Kashmiri general Tunga as we saw in the first chapter. Both were defeated, as also Trilochana's son, Nidar Bhīma, who fleeing to Kashmir drew the Muslims into that kingdom. Mahmūd on this occasion (c. 1011 A.D.) is said to have plundered Kashmir and compelled a great many people to embrace Islam. Again he returned from Ghazni in 1018 A. D. and on his way, crossing the Jamuna, received the submission of Hara Datta, the Rāja of Baran (Bulandshahr) who allowed himself to be converted to Islam together with 10,000 followers. Another chieftain, Kulchand of Mahawan, offering gallant opposition, was killed along with 50,000 people dyeing the Jamuna red with their blood.

After the sack of Kanauj (1019 A.D.) once more Mahmūd combed the country with his army capturing the forts of Munj, Asni, Sharwa, Gwalior and Kālinjar. The Hindu princes instead of co-operating among themselves quarrelled. Rājyapāla of Kanauj being at first left alone to submit to the invader was later on punished for his weakness. No sooner than Mahmūd's back was turned, Ganda the Chāndel Rāja of Kālinjar, joining with the prince of Gwalior, attacked and slew Rājyapāla. This drew Mahmūd again into the plains and the peevish princes of Hindustan were chastised for ever. They made a formidable display of their numbers (according to Ferishta : 36,000 horses, 45,000 foot and 640 elephants) and then turned tail. Mahmūd triumphed as usual, receiving submission, backed with enormous booty including riches and elephants, and returned to Ghazni (1022 A.D.).

#### *Last Act of Butshikan :*

The last act of this melodrama was enacted in 1025 A.D. Mahmūd left his capital on 17 October, 1024 A.D., with an army double that with which he had fought his first Indian battle twenty-five years



earlier. Marching at the head of his own army of picked warriors, he was followed besides by a body of 30,000 volunteers from Turkistan and other countries, attracted by prospects of plunder. They reached Multan on 20 November, 1024 A.D. The objective this time was Somnāth, on the Kathiawar coast, a temple far exceeding in wealth and importance any he had yet quarried.

Very elaborate preparations were made, for the route lay through the inhospitable desert *via* Sāmbhar (Ajmer) and Anhilwārā. (Pātan). "Each trooper was ordered to carry with him fodder, water and food for several days, and Mahmūd supplemented individual efforts by loading his own establishment of 30,000 camels with water and supplies for the desert march." Reaching Anhilwārā in January 1025 A.D. Mahmūd discovered that its Rāja, Bhīmdēo, and most of the inhabitants had fled. The remnants were defeated and plundered. At Dewalwārā on the way the people had stuck to their places fondly believing that the great Somnāth would not allow even a hair of his devotee's head to be touched. The rest of the tragedy may be related in the words of Ibn-al-Athir :—

The friends of God reached Somnāth on a Thursday in the middle of Zu-l-Ka'da, and there beheld 'a strong fortress built upon the seashore, so that it was washed by the waves. The people of the fort were on the walls amusing themselves at the expense of the confident Muslims, telling them that their deity would cut off the last man of them and destroy them all. On the morrow which was Friday, the assailants advanced to the assault, and when the Hindus beheld the Muhammadans fighting, they abandoned their posts and left the walls. The Muslims planted their ladders against the walls and gained the summit; then they proclaimed their success with their religious war-cry and exhibited the prowess of Islam. Then followed a fearful slaughter and matters wore a serious aspect.

'A body of Hindus hurried to Somnāth, cast themselves before the deity and besought him to grant them victory. Night came on and the fight was suspended. Next morning early the Muhammadans renewed the battle and made greater havoc among the Hindus, till they drove them from the town to the house of their idol Somnāth. A dreadful slaughter followed at the gate of the temple. Band after band of defenders entered the temple and with their hands clasped round their necks wept and passionately entreated Somnāth. Then again they issued forth to fight until they were slain, and but few were left alive. These took to the sea in boats to make their escape, but the Muslims overtook them, and some were killed and some were drowned.'

The principal idol was broken and its pieces were sent to Ghazni, Mecca and Bagdad to be used as stepping stones by the faithful..

‘The treasury was near and in it there were many idols of gold and silver. Over it there were veils hanging, set with jewels, every one of which was of immense value. The worth of what was found in the temple exceeded 2,000,000 *dinars*, all of which was taken. The number of the slain exceeded 50,000.’

Thus was medieval Hindu India’s Holy of Holies desecrated, devastated and looted. Besides Ganges water being brought daily to wash the idol, the sea itself laved the temple steps at every flow of the tide. The shrine was endowed with more than 10,000 villages for its upkeep, and yet the most precious gifts poured in from all parts of the country. The temple bells were hung with chains of gold weighing 200 *mans*. ‘A thousand Brāhman̄s were employed in worshipping the idol and attending on the visitors, and 500 damsels sung and danced at the door.’ Among the wonders of that place, writes Zakariya-al-Kazwini, was the idol of Somnāth.

‘It was in the middle of the temple without anything to support from below, or to suspend it from above. It was held in the highest honour among the Hindus and whoever beheld it floating in the air was struck with amazement, whether he was a Musalman or an infidel. The Hindus used to go on pilgrimage to it whenever there was an eclipse of the moon and would then assemble there to the number of more than 100,000.

‘When the King (Mahmūd) asked his companions what they had to say about the marvel of the idol and of its staying in the air without prop or support, several maintained that it was upheld by some hidden support. The King directed a person to go and feel all around and above and below it with a spear, which he did but met with no obstacle. One of the attendants then stated his opinion that the canopy was made of lode-stone, and the idol of iron, and that the ingenious builder had skilfully contrived that the magnet should not exercise a greater force on any one side—hence the idol was suspended in the middle. Some coincided and others differed. Permission was obtained from the Sultan to remove some stones from the top of the canopy to settle the point. When two stones were removed from the summit the idol swerved on one side; when more were taken away it inclined still further, until at last it rested on the ground.’

Rich freighted with the spoils of Somnāth, Mahmūd returned to Ghazni after a scrape or two by a more westerly route through Sind. Though past fifty years of age and surrounded with troubles nearer home, he led his last punitive expedition in 1027 A.D., against the Jats of Sind for having harassed him during the previous year. With this culminated his Indian career. Of the only Indian province, viz., the Punjab, which he annexed to his dominion and its administrative

history we shall deal with a little later. Here we must close with a final estimate of the great Butshikan (Iconoclast).

*The Janus-headed Sultan :*

Mahmūd, like most Muhammadan rulers of Hindustan after him, was double-faced in his character. The ruthless despoiler of temples in India was also the paragon of cultured monarchs among his own people at home. It is said that Mahmūd had a very ugly pox-marked face like Timūr's and that he tried to compensate for it by trying to acquire an attractive mien as a ruler. It might be said with truth that the former reflected his demeanour in India and the latter his character at home. In short, Mahmūd was an angel to his Muslim subjects at Ghazni and the devil incarnate to infidels abroad. Though more affected directly by his doings in this country than his reputation in the Islamic world, we cannot for reasons that will become apparent hereafter ignore the other side of the picture.

When Mahmūd returned home in 1026 A.D. after his last and most arduous temple raid, and spread out the enormous loot before the ravishing gaze of his Ghazni subjects, the entire Muslim world rang with a pæan of praise. The Caliph bestowed on him and his sons fresh honours and titles. Though his modern enlightened Indian Muslim biographer, Professor Habib, might think that "Islam sanctioned neither the vandalism nor the plundering motives of the invader," to his own contemporaries Mahmūd Butshikan was undoubtedly a great Ghāzi and the greatest Muslim monarch of his age. There was little exaggeration in this admiring appreciation. Mahmūd's Empire was more extensive than that of the Caliph of Bagdad. The latter was nominally the head of the Islamic world, but even here he had partners in the sovereignty owing to the establishment of the Cairo and Cordova Caliphates. Nearer home the dominions of the Commander of the Faithful had come to be shared among numerous Turkish or other princes of whom Mahmūd was for the time being the greatest. So powerful had the ruler of Ghazni become that he not only overawed all the rest of his tribe, but also made the Caliphate feel precarious. In the words of E. B. Havell, "He would have sacked Baghdad with as little compunction as he plundered Somnāth, if the undertaking had seemed as profitable and as easy, for he did not hesitate to threaten the Khalif with death when the latter refused to give him Samarkand." Such a powerful

ruler, had he the resources and the taste for it, would not rest his prestige on mere conquest. Mahmūd was no barbarian though he was guilty of barbarous acts during his Indian raids.

Like Louis XIV of France, nearly seven centuries later, Mahmūd, made his court and capital the centre of a solar system of which he himself was the Sun. Great architects, scholars, poets and artists were summoned from all parts of his wide dominions to embellish Ghazni. "Napoleon," writes Lane-Poole, "imported the choicest works of art from the countries he subdued to adorn his Paris ; Mahmūd did better, he brought the artists and the poets themselves to illuminate his Court. From the cities of the Oxus and the shore of the Caspian, from Persia and Khorasan, he pressed into his service the lights of oriental letters, and compelled them not unwillingly, to revolve round his sun like planets in his firmament of glory." Of these planets we have space to speak of only a few, those of the greatest magnitude. Looking at them through the Indian telescope, Al-Biruni eclipses all others, even the most celebrated author of *Shāhnāmāh*, Firdausi, himself. Then comes Utbi, the historian secretary of Mahmūd, to whose first-hand reports we are so much indebted. To these might be added Baihaki 'the oriental Mr. Pepys' (Lane-Poole calls him) whose gossiping memoirs lend colour to Utbi's more matter of fact pictures.

Much has been written about these and others, particularly Firdausi, by writers of medieval Indian history. Without digressing into such irrelevancies, we would say a few words about Al-Biruni alone. He was a native of Khiva, born in 973 A.D., and therefore two years younger than the Sultan. He outlived Mahmūd Ghazni by eighteen years and died in 1048 A.D. He was a scholar, learned in 'astronomy, mathematics, chronology, mathematical geography, physics, chemistry and minerology.' But chief interest for us lies in '*Al-Biruni's India*' a work which its learned translator describes as 'a magic island of quiet impartial research in the midst of a world of clashing swords, burning towns, and plundered temples.' It contains Al-Biruni's observations on the history, character, manners and customs of the Hindus which are all carefully and dispassionately recorded. According to him, 'Unfortunately the Hindus do not pay much attention to historical order of things, and they are very careless in relating the chronological order of their kings, etc., and when pressed for information not knowing what to say invariably take to tale-

telling.' The writer of this unpalatable criticism had read our *Purāṇas* and also admired our philosophy, especially the *Bhagavad Gītā*. He could read them in Sanskrit. Al-Biruni was not less critical of his master, for he did not approve of his insensate orgies of destruction in India. The scattered remains of the Hindus, he wrote, 'cherish, of course, the most inveterate hatred of all Muslims. This is the reason, too, why Hindu sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country conquered by us, and have fled to places where our hands cannot yet reach, to Kashmir, Benares and other places.'

To return to Mahmūd, there is hardly anything more to be added that will be apposite. Many anecdotes are told of his great sense of justice. Nizām-ul-mulk (not to be confounded with his namesake the celebrated founder of the Nizām's Dominions) the Seljuk *vezir*, whom Lane-Poole calls the most sagacious and high-minded Asiatic statesman of the Middle Ages, thought that 'Mahmūd was a just sovereign, a lover of learning, a man of generous nature and of pure faith.' Without quarrelling with this estimate we might repeat the wail of a disappointed lover : 'What if she be fair, if she be not fair to me.' To India Mahmūd Ghazni was a gifted condottiere.

There is one other aspect of Mahmūd's life, however, which we must consider before we can pass on to his successors. What did Mahmūd do to perpetuate his realm? Nothing, or even worse than nothing, for he contemplated a division of his empire among his sons. "A great soldier, a man of infinite courage and indefatigable energy of mind and body," writes Lane-Poole, "Mahmūd was no constructive or far-seeing statesman. We hear of no laws or institutions or methods of government that sprang from his initiative. Outward order and security was all he attempted to attain in his unwieldy empire; to organize and consolidate was not in his scheme. He left his dominions so ill-knitted together that they began to fall asunder as soon as he was no longer alive to guard them by his vigilant activity." While appreciative of Mahmūd's other great qualities Elphinstone was also of opinion that "Even his Indian operations, for which all other objects were resigned, are so far from displaying any sense of system or combination, that their desultory and inconclusive nature would lead us to deny him a comprehensive intellect, unless we suppose its range to have been contracted by the sordid passions of his heart."

*India and the House of Ghazni :*

Under such circumstances it is a wonder that the House of Ghazni endured at all for over 150 years after the death of Mahmūd, which occurred in 1030 A.D. Yet the tale of his successors is soon told, for there was no outstanding figure among them, at any rate after Masūd. Besides, we are little concerned with their intestine wars and bickerings. 'Discord, degeneracy and decay' sum up the character of the period from 1030 to 1186 A.D. There were in all fifteen rulers after Mahmūd including Tughril an usurper (1052 A.D.). Only one among these, Ibrāhim, ruled as many as forty years (1059-99 A.D.); Bahrām Shāh, with much diminished power, reigned during thirty-five years (1118-52 A.D.). The last of the family, Khusrū Malik, was nominally king for twenty-six years (1160-86 A.D.). Long before this the Seljuk Turks had begun to flood the Empire. Persia was for ever lost within ten years of Mahmūd's death. The home province of Ghazni and the Punjab were all that was left of the vast Empire. Finally, even in India, part of Mahmūd's possessions were lost through erosion, Hindu princes eating into them as much as they dared. But one thing is noteworthy, namely, that India proved the asylum to the House of Ghazni, from Masūd to Khusrū Malik, in all their troubles and misfortunes.

As stated before, Mahmūd had intended to divide his Empire between his two sons, Masūd and Muhammad. But before a year was out the strong arm of Masūd decided the fate of both his weaker brother and the Empire. Muhammad was blinded and imprisoned and Masūd ascended the throne with the blessings of the Caliph on whom he had bestowed enormous gifts. The new King of Ghazni appears to have been a Hercules in personal prowess, but in spite of his reputation for being a Rustam, he had to bow before the Seljuks in 1040 A.D., when Tughril Beg appropriated Persia by defeating him at Dandanakan near Merv. He made up for this reduction of the Empire, however, by maintaining a glorious court. Let us have a glimpse of it from the garrulous Baihaki whom we have mentioned before.

*The Grandeur that was Ghazni :*

'On Tuesday the 12th of Muharram the Amir went to the Firozi Garden and sat in the Green Pavilion on the Golden Plain. A sumptuous feast was ordered. The Amir Maudūd (Masūd's son) and the Minister came

and sat down, and the army passed in review before them. First passed the star of Amir Maudūd, the canopy, waving standards and two hundred slaves of the household with jackets of mail and spears, and many led horses and camels, and infantry with their banners displayed, and a hundred and seventy slaves fully armed and equipped with all their stars borne before them. After them came Irtigin the Chamberlain and his slaves to the number of eighty, and then fifty military slaves of the household, preceded by twenty officers finely accoutred, with many led horses and camels followed by other officers till all had passed.

'It was now near mid-day prayer, when the Amir bade his son and the Minister and the chief Chamberlain and the officers to sit down to the feast. He too sat down and ate bread.... The Amir said, "Let us begin without ceremony, for we have come into the country, and we will drink in the Firozi Garden." Accordingly much wine was brought immediately from the pavilion into the garden, and fifty goblets and flagons were placed in the middle of a small tent.

'The goblets were sent round and the Amir said, "Let us keep fair measure and fill the cups evenly, in order that there may be no unfairness." Each goblet contained nearly a pint. They began to get jolly and the minstrels sang. Bu-l-Hasan drank five goblets, his head was affected at the sixth, he lost his senses at the seventh, and began to vomit at the eighth, when the servants carried him off. Bu-l-Ala the physician dropped his head at the fifth cup, and he also was carried off. Khalil Daud drank ten; Siyabiruz nine, and both were borne away to the hill of Dailaman. Bu-Naim drank twelve and ran away. Daud Maimandi fell down drunk, and the singers and buffoons all rolled off tipsy, when the Sultan and Khwājā Abdur Razak alone remained.

'When the Khwājā had drunk eighteen cups he made his obedience and prepared to go, saying to the Amir, "If you give your slave any more, he will lose his respect for your Majesty as well as his own wits." The Amir laughed and gave him leave to go, when he got up and departed in a most respectful manner.

'After this the Amir kept on drinking and enjoying himself. He drank twenty-seven full goblets of half a maund each (!). He then arose, called for a basin of water and his praying carpet, washed his face and read the mid-day prayers as well as the afternoon ones and so acquitted himself that you would have said he had not drunk a single cup. He then got on an elephant and returned to the palace.

'I witnessed the whole of this scene with mine own eyes.—I, Abu-l-Faql.'

Ghazni, under the rule of the Idol-breaker, had been transformed so as to take 'the first rank among the many stately cities of the Caliphate.' This Āli Bābā with his more than Forty Thieves had built therein his sumptuous mosque of marble and granite and called it the *Celestial Bride*. It was furnished with rich carpets, candelabras,

and other ornaments of silver and gold, and, according to Ferishta, possessed such beauty that it struck every beholder with astonishment. When the nobility saw the taste of the monarch they vied with one another in the magnificence of their private palaces as well as in the public buildings which they raised for the embellishment of the city. "Thus, in a short time, the capital was ornamented with mosques, porches, fountains, reservoirs, aqueducts, and cisterns, beyond every city in the East." Mahmūd's court, according to all accounts, vied with that of the Caliphs in solemnity as well as pomp and splendour; while he founded a university at Ghazni in which were collected rare and curious books in all languages. He also organized a museum of natural curiosities. For the maintenance of these vast establishments Mahmūd endowed a large sum out of which allowances were paid to professors and students. In short, he showed so much munificence to men of eminence and learning "that his capital exhibited a greater assemblage of literary genius than any other monarch in Asia had ever been able to produce." Such was the legacy which culminated in the convivial parties of Masūd. All these must be traced to the *Eldorado* India that had made possible the splendour and the luxury. Indian architects suggested some of the *motifs* that Indian artisans forcibly carried off to Ghazni executed for their Muslim masters; Indian captives that were taken in their thousands served to breed enervating habits among the restless and energetic Turks, Afghans, Arabs and Persians who formed the population of Ghazni; and lastly, Indian women abducted and enslaved also in large numbers sapped the vigour of their ravishers and contributed to their downfall. Such was the state of Mahmūd's successors when powerful rivals arose in another Afghan city, Ghor or Ghūr. The conflicts between these two cities reached a climax when, 1155 A.D., Alā-ud-dīn Husain of Ghor earned for himself the sobriquet of *Jahān-soz* or World-Burner by destroying Ghazni with fire and sword. This wave of hatred came with such fury that it deluged the beautiful capital of Mahmūd undoing the atrocities committed by the Idol-breaker in all his life time. Men were slaughtered in their thousands, women and children were enslaved. "Of all the noble buildings with which the kings had enriched their stately capital hardly a stone was left to tell of its grandeur. The very graves of the hated dynasty were dug up and the royal bones scattered to the crows—but even Afghan vengeance spared the tomb of Mahmūd, the idol of Muslim soldiers. That tomb and



two lofty minarets, at a little distance from the modern town, alone stand to show that Ghazni was. On one of the minarets one may still read the resonant titles of the Idol-breaker, and on the marble tomb-stand an inscription entreats : *God's mercy for the great Amir Mahmūd.*"

### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
969	Separate Fatimite Caliphate set up at Cairo.
973-1048	Al-Biruni ; throws light on Hindu India.
993-4	Foundation of Delhi city.
1016	Canute King over England, Denmark and Norway.
1052-3	Great battle of Koppam between Cholas and Chālukyas.
1066	William the Conqueror in England.
1071	Revival of Islam under Seljuk Turks.
1076-1126	Chālukya Vikramāditya's campaigns ; commences Vikrama-Kāla (1076 A.D.).
1084	Sack of Rome by Robert Guiscard.
1089-1101	Tyranny of Harsha 'the Nero of Kashmir.'
1095	Pope Urban II summons first Crusade.
1096-1143	Siddh Rāj of Gujarat patronises Muslims and punishes Hindus in a quarrel at Cambay.
1112-55	Govindachandra, greatest Gaharwar ruler, defends Benares against Muslims. Kingdom extends from Kanauj to Patna.
1130	Vishnuvardhana Hoysala (patron of Rāmānujāchārya) sacks Kadamba capital, Banavāsi.
1130-99	Kākatiyas of Wārangal fight with Chola and Yādavas.
1147	The second Crusade.
1155	Alā-ud-dīn Ghūri ( <i>Jahān-Soz</i> ) destroys Ghazni.
1160-7	Bijjala Kālachuri usurps Chālukya throne. Foundation of the Lingāyet sect.
1169	Saladin Sultan in Egypt.
1182	Prithvirāja sacks Mahoba the Chāndel capital.
1186	End of the Ghaznavids.
1187	Jerusalem captured by Saladin. Yādavas become independent in the Deccan.
1189	The third Crusade.
1202	The fourth Crusade.
1206	Sultanate of Delhi founded by Aibak.
1214	Peking taken by Chingiz Khān.
1215	Magna Charta signed by King John.
1216-75	Pāndyas eclipse Cholas, Kākatiyas and Hoysalas.
1218	Chingiz Khān in Khwarizm.
1220-35	Hoysalas weaken Chola power.
1221-22	Chingiz Khān invades India. The fifth Crusade.
1227	Death of Chingiz Khān.

## CHAPTER IV

### SLAVES ENTHRONED

#### *Makers of Muslim India :*

The real founder of Muslim Power in India was Muhammad Ghūri the next invader (1175-1206 A.D.). The Arabs and the Turks had acted as pioneers and path-finders. They had cut the first stones for the edifice in conquering Sind, Multan and the Punjab. The foundations of lasting dominion for the Crescent had not been laid. That work was not even attempted by either Imād-ud-dīn or Mahmūd Ghazni. Such authority as had been created by Mahmūd and his successors in the Punjab, as we shall presently see, only served as a stepping-stone at the threshold for the Ghūrīds to enter India. Once that was done the breakers of Ghazni became the makers of Muslim India.

Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak was not the first slave to sit on a throne. Mahmūd Ghazni's father Sabuktagin, among several others, had done it before him. But certainly Kutb-ud-dīn, the slave of Muhammad Ghūri, was the first to enjoy that privilege in India. As we shall witness in the following pages, he did more than fill the throne ; for he created the Muslim Sultanate of Delhi which in the fulness of time was to bear the amplest fruit. He was followed by two other great slaves, Iltutmish and Balban, who not merely lent an inglorious name to the first Muslim dynasty ruling from Delhi, but proved for all time that

Rank's but the guinea stamp,  
Man's the gold for a'that.

The so-called Slave Kings held sovereign power in Hindustan during eighty years, from the death of Shihāb-ud-dīn Muhammad Ghūri (1206 A.D.) to the accession of Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī (1290 A.D.). This was the seed-time of Muslim empire in India. In the course of the next hundred years, under the successors of the Slaves,—Khaljīs (1290-1320 A.D.) and Tughlaks (1321-88 A.D.)—the flag of the Crescent waved over the greater part of India.

*The Ghaznavid Legacy :*

The Punjab had been regularly incorporated within his dominions by Mahmūd Ghazni. But Ariyaruk, the viceroy he had appointed at Lahore, having proved refractory, Masūd replaced him with another. Ahmad Niyāltagin, nick-named Mahmūd's 'sneeze' (alter ego), on account of the great trust the late Sultan had placed in him, was the man chosen. As a measure of precaution Ahmad was put only in military charge of the Indian province, the civil administration being continued in the charge of Kāzi Shirāz. There was also an intelligence department established with a head 'to whom all orders from the Sultan and ministers were sent and who reported everything that occurred to his master.' To make assurance doubly sure, the new viceroy's son was detained at Ghazni as a hostage and the following strange message was sent to Niyāltagin by Khwājā Maimandi, the *vezir* :—

'You two must not give trouble to the Court. What you have to write to me must be stated in detail in order to receive a distinct reply. His Majesty thinks it advisable to send with you some of the Dailami chiefs, to remove them to a distance from the Court, since they are foreigners ; and also some suspected persons and refractory slaves. Whenever you go on a campaign you must take them with you, but be careful that they do not mingle with the Army of Lahore, and let them not drink wine or play polo. Keep spies and informers to watch them, and never neglect this duty. These be the King's secret orders, not to be divulged.'

Odd as these arrangements might appear to us, the conduct of Niyāltagin fully justified them. Reports soon reached Ghazni of his ambitious designs. Anxious to emulate the exploits of Mahmūd, he led his army to Benares and plundered that holy city of the Hindus and returned to Lahore with enormous loot. This adventure in itself should not have been unwelcome to the authorities at home but for other indications of Niyāltagin's contumacious intentions. While he dispatched glowing reports of his success to Masūd no share of the spoils was sent to Ghazni. At the same time information was received of his recruitment in large numbers of the ruffians of Lahore with these appropriations and of his falsely declaring himself to be a son of Mahmūd. Before he could repudiate his allegiance to Masūd, therefore, it was necessary to take action. The task was entrusted to a Hindu general named Tilak.

The breaker of Hindu idols had entertained no prejudice against the recruitment of Hindu soldiers in his army. At all times under

the Ghaznavids we come across references to Hindus freely participating in the wars of their conquerors. Only in a few cases mentioned before were they converted to Islam. According to Ferishta even unconverted chieftains like Siwand Rai, at the head of a considerable body of Hindu cavalry, were employed by Mahmūd. Low caste Hindus, especially, who could not find preferment in their own caste-ridden society, found under their Mlechcha masters endless avenues of advancement. Tilak was one such, for he was the son of a barber. Nevertheless, he had a handsome presence and a ready tongue; besides he could write a beautiful hand, both in Hindi and Persian. In the alchemy of his amorous adventures he appears to have been an Alcibiades. In the *bon viveur* Masūd he found an appreciative master, who made him his private secretary and employed him as official interpreter in his dealings with the Hindus. 'As a mark of royal favour, he was granted a gold-embroidered robe, a jewelled necklace of gold, a canopy and an umbrella; and kettle-drums were beaten, and ensigns with gilded tops were unfurled at his residence in accordance with Hindu fashion to proclaim his elevation to high official dignity.'

Though expediency and the personal levity of Masūd, rather than calculated and enlightened policy, were responsible for Tilak's exaltation, it is to be noted that it was the first instance of an unconverted infidel in India being so treated by the very son of that *Ghāzi* Mahmūd who had vowed *jihād* on the idolatrous Hindus. He was now being used to wage war on a 'friend of God' who had proved refractory.

In the middle of 1033 A.D., a year marked by a devastating famine and plague which, according to Ferishta, spread from Mesopotamia to India and depopulated whole districts, Tilak marched into Hindustan where fighting had already commenced between the partisans of the two Ghazni officers, Kāzi Shirāz and Ahmad Niyāltagin. The Hindu general defeated the latter in the very first engagement when the rebellious governor effected his escape from the field of battle. Tilak put a price of 500,000 *dirhams* on his head which was not long after brought in by the Jats. Encouraged by this success, Masūd himself led an expedition to Hānsi (11 miles east of Hisar) in person (1037 A.D.) to fulfil a vow he seemed to have taken long before. In the course of this exploit he was taken ill and repenting of his incontinent living, like Babur on a more famous occasion five centuries

later, publicly renounced wine and caused all the goblets to be flung into the Jhelum enjoining upon all his officers to take likewise a vow of abstinence. The fortress, heroically defended and believed by the Hindus to have been impregnable, was nevertheless taken, followed by the usual slaughter, enslavement and plunder. The spoils were distributed among the troops. But with all this and the orgy of wine drinking in which Masūd indulged betimes, agreeing with the sentiments of one of his own court-poets who wrote :

‘ I do repent of wine and talk of wine,  
Of idols fair and chins like silver fine,  
A lip-repentance and a lustful heart,  
O God, forgive this penitence of mine ’—

the campaign itself proved disastrous by what it occasioned. The Seljuks, taking advantage of his absence, invaded Ghazni territory and Masūd fled before them in 1040 A.D. towards Hindustan. His own men mutinied *en route*, took him captive and finally put him to death (1041 A.D.).

The unedifying history of Masūd's successors has been in part already told. Here we shall record only a few incidents relating to India. After Tilak defeated Niyāltagin, Masūd's second son Majdūd had been placed in charge of the Punjab (1036 A.D.). He was superseded by his cousin Nāmi, when Masūd himself was overthrown by his own brother Muhammad in whose favour the mutiny that ended Masūd's life had taken place (1041 A.D.). However, when Masūd's eldest son Maudūd was engaged in a deadly combat with his uncle Muhammad, Majdūd the younger brother of Maudūd was still active in the Punjab (1042 A.D.) He had captured the important town of Thānesar and was about to attack Delhi. In the meanwhile, the struggle for the throne in Ghazni having ended in favour of Maudūd, the latter turned his attention to the Punjab. Not content with getting rid of his defeated uncle's son Nāmi, he also felt suspicious of his own more energetic brother. But Majdūd died all on a sudden and left the Punjab in the undisputed possession of Maudūd, though he could command little authority there.

Two years later, Mahipāla, the Rāja of Delhi, recaptured without difficulty Hānsi, Thānesar and Kāngra, and threatened Lahore itself (1043-4 A.D.) which was saved by the alacrity of its defenders. This resulted in Maudūd placing the Punjab under the dual charge of his two sons, Mahmūd and Mansūr, besides dispatching against

the Hindus the energetic *Kotwal* of Ghazni, Bu'Ali Hasan. The last named, while yet on the threshold of his task, was recalled and put to death on account of some court intrigue. Then followed the death of Maudūd himself in 1049 A.D. This set in motion a series of succession disputes which distracted attention from India for ten years until the accession of Ibrāhim in 1059 A.D. The only incident worth recording during this interval is the appointment of the able officer Nūshġigin to the government of the Punjab (1049 A.D.). He recaptured the fortress of Kāngra and was about to restore order in his province when he was called home on account of the usurpation of Tughril (1052 A.D.).

Ibrāhim's reign, as we saw, was the longest in the dynasty (1059-99 A.D.). The comparative security of his kingdom during this period enabled him to turn his attention to India. In 1079 A.D. he crossed the southern border of the Punjab and took the towns of Ajudhan (Pāk Pātan) and Rūpāl. A reference to Ibrāhim having come upon a Parsi settlement on the western coast (Navsāri?) during this campaign makes it the more memorable. Ibrāhim was succeeded by his 23rd son, Masūd III, who ruled for seventeen years (1099-1115 A.D.). During this reign Tughātigin of Lahore is said to have led an expedition beyond the Ganges, though no details are recorded. Then followed another spate of family disputes, during which Arsalān Shāh, one of the occupants of the throne, sought refuge in India for a while; then returning home was shortly after put to death. He was followed by Bahrām Shāh in whose reign the destruction of Ghazni, already described, took place (1155 A.D.). But in our present context what is of greater interest is the rebellion of Bāhlim in the Punjab. This officer had been appointed governor of the province by Arsalān and refused to acknowledge Bahrām. Though defeated in 1119 A.D., he was reinstated and served to subdue many a turbulent Hindu chieftain on the borders of the Punjab. Bāhlim established himself at Nāgaur and once again turned contumacious. This time, being pursued by Bahrām, while attempting to escape, he was swallowed up in a quicksand, together with two of his sons, near Multan. "He deserves to be remembered," writes Sir Wolseley Haig, "because he established Muhammadan rule over provinces which had never acknowledged the authority of the greatest of the Ghaznavids. Nāgaur is situated more than 300 miles to the south of Lahore, and it is said that Bāhlim was accompanied, on his march against Bahrām, by ten

sons, each of whom ruled a province or district."

Bahrām, after the destruction of Ghazni by Alā-ud-dīn Ghūri, returned to his capital only once before his death as a fugitive on the borders of India in 1152 A.D. He was followed by his son Khusrū Shāh who, being expelled from Ghazni by the Turkmāns of Khurasan, fled to Lahore where he died in 1160 A.D. Khusrū Malik, the last descendant of the great Idol-breaker, ascended the throne at Lahore, the capital of his ancestors being permanently lost to the family. "He was a mild and voluptuous prince to whom authority was irksome. The governors of the districts of his small kingdom behaved as independent rulers, but he recked nothing so long as the means of indulgence was at hand." The districts fell off one after another from his allegiance until, in 1186 A.D., Muhammad Ghūri captured Lahore and sent Khusrū Malik and his son Bahrām to Fīrūz-Koh (Ghūr) where they were both put to death, after having been in prison for five years. Thus passed away the last of the line of Sabuktagin and Mahmūd after two centuries of rule (977-1186 A.D.). They were masters of the Punjab from 1001-1186 A.D.

### *Third Muslim Invader :*

Muhammad Ghūri was the third Muslim invader of India. He came to conquer and annex where his two predecessors, Imām-ud-dīn and Mahmūd, had come primarily to punish and plunder. He was the nephew of the Ghūrid destroyer of Ghazni, Alā-ud-dīn. He and his brother Ghiyās-ud-dīn ruled respectively at Ghazni (since 1173-4 A.D.) and Ghor or Fīrūz-Koh (from 1163 A.D.). Unlike the late dynasty of Ghazni, that of Ghor appears to have been Afghan, though some believe they might have been Turki or Persian as well. While the elder brother, Ghiyās-ud-dīn, was content with the western dominions of his ancestors, the younger, Muiz-ud-dīn (also called Shihāb-ud-dīn) Muhammad, with Ghazni as his base, turned his ambitious eyes towards twice conquered Hindustan.

The three Muslim provinces of Sind, Multan and the Punjab were the first to be subdued. Multan was taken in 1175 A.D., Sind down to the sea in 1182 A.D., and Lahore, as we saw, fell in 1186 A.D. During the remaining twenty years of his life (1186-1206 A.D.) Muhammad carved out an Empire for himself, extending from Ghazni in the west to Gaur in the east, though he left no heirs of his body to rule it after him. That fortune descended to his slaves.

*Thirty Years of War :*

Muhammad Ghūri did not make as promising a beginning as the Idol-breaker nearly two hundred years earlier. His ultimate conquests in Hindustan were also due as much to the courage and enterprise of his slaves as to his own. Though he was successful in his Indian expedition, led against the heretical Muslim ruler of Multan in 1175 A.D., he had to make good his position by low stratagem rather than by open prowess in arms. At Uch, for example, he intrigued with the Bhatti Rāja's wife, promising to place her at the head of his *harem*, and got rid of her unloved husband by murder. Finally the unfaithful lady was left in the lurch. In 1178 A.D. Muhammad was driven back with heavy losses when he attempted to take Anhilwārā, the Vāghela capital of Gujarat. Next year he wrenched Peshawar from the feeble hands of the Ghaznavid Khusrū Malik's governor, and appeared before Lahore itself in 1181 A.D., which he finally took in 1186 A.D. Here too Muhammad had recourse to measures which must stand condemned for ever in the land of the noble chivalry of Rājasthān. Khusrū Malik was compelled to surrender his son as a hostage. Then Muhammad proceeded to Sialkot where he built a fortress. Khusrū Malik attempted to take this when his adversary turned his back. So in 1186 Muhammad once more came to Lahore. When Khusrū sued for peace he pretended to release Khusrū's son who had been taken as a hostage on the previous occasion. The credulous Khusrū, being assured of his safety, came out to receive his son. Then treacherously Muhammad seized him and sent both him and his son to their doom in Firūz-Koh as stated before.

Lurid light is thrown on the state of affairs in the Punjab at this time by an incident which is likely to be passed over by historians. The Rājas of Jammu were in perpetual strife with the Ghaznavid rulers of Lahore. But the valiant Khokārs who had once fought against Mahmūd were now won over by Khusrū Malik from their allegiance to Rāja Chakra Deo of Jammu. The latter, like the Lodi chieftain who invited Babur in later years, called in Muhammad Ghūri who swallowed all, Hindu and Muslim alike, in one common subjection. In spite of such native assistance, however, Muhammad could progress little beyond capturing stray fortresses like Bhātinda or Sirhind which he took in the winter of 1190-91 A.D. But this brought him into opposition with his most formidable antagonist in



India, Prithvirāja Chauhān, ruler of Delhi and Ajmer. In an encounter which took place at Tarāori (Tarāin, 14 miles from Thānesar), in 1191 A.D. Muhammad was severely wounded, and routed for a second time by an infidel prince. Rāi Pithaura, as Muslim writers called him, pursued the Ghūri army for 40 miles and then turned to the fortress of Sirhind, which also capitulated after a prolonged siege of thirteen months.

Smarting under the humiliation of the first battle of Tarāin Muhammad, it is related, 'never slumbered in ease nor waked but in sorrow and anxiety.' To retrieve his position he made very thorough and elaborate preparations and returned to the fray the very next year (1192 A.D.). The Hindus also anticipating this were not slow to meet the enemy. 300,000 horse and 3000 elephants besides a very large infantry gathered under 150 princes of Hindustan (excepting Jayachandra of Kanauj, Prithvi's father-in-law and deadliest foe) on the hallowed field of Tarāin (wrongly called Narain in the following account of Minhāj-us-Sirāj). In the words of the Muslim historian :

'Next year the Sultan assembled another army and advanced to Hindustan, to avenge his defeat. A trustworthy person named Muin-ud-din, one of the principal men of the hills of Tolak, informed me that he was in this army, and that its force amounted to 120,000 horsemen bearing armour. Before the Sultan could arrive the fort of Sirhind had capitulated, and the enemy were encamped in the vicinity of Narain (Tarāin). The Sultan drew up in battle array, leaving his main body in the rear, with the banners, canopies, and elephants, to the number of several divisions. His plan of attack being formed, he advanced quietly. The light unarmoured horsemen were made into four divisions of 10,000, and were directed to advance and harass the enemy on all sides, on the right and on the left, in the front and in the rear, with their arrows. When the enemy collected his forces to attack, they were to support each other, and to charge at full speed. By these tactics the infidels were worsted, the Almighty gave us the victory over them, and they fled.

'Pithaura alighted from his elephant, mounted a horse, and galloped off, but he was captured near Sarsuti, and *sent to hell*. Govind Rai of Delhi was killed in the battle, and the Sultan recognised his head by the two teeth which he had broken. *The capital, Ajmer, and all the Siwalik hills, Hansi, Sarsuti, and other districts were the results of this victory which was gained in the year 588 H.*' (1192 A.D.)

As Smith very correctly points out, "the second battle of Tarāin in 1192 may be regarded as the decisive contest which ensured the ultimate success of the Muhammadan attack on Hindostan. All the numerous subsequent victories were merely consequences of the over-

whelming defeat of the Hindu league on the historic plain to the north of Delhi."

Kutb-ud-din Aibak conquered Meerut and Koil, and made Delhi the seat of the government which was entrusted to him. The ruthlessness of the conqueror may be estimated from his indiscriminate slaughter of the people in the conquered cities which were also plundered and destroyed. In Ajmer, for instance, the idol temples were demolished to their very foundations, and mosques and colleges were built, where 'the precepts of Islam, and the customs of the law were divulged and established.' After this, 'on a promise of a punctual payment of a large tribute, he delivered over the country of Ajmer to Golā, a natural son of Prithvirāja.'

The fate of Prithvi soon overtook Jayachandra of Kanauj who had held aloof and chuckled over the destruction of his son-in-law for the crime of eloping with his not unwilling daughter. We pointed out the political importance of Kanauj in an earlier context. The Muslim conquerors were not blind to its significance. Mahmūd Ghazni had not missed it. 'There were Muslims in that country,' writes Ibn-al-Athir, 'since the days of Mahmūd ibn Sabuktigin who continued faithful to the law of Islam and constant in prayer and good works.' The same writer speaks of Jayachandra as the King of Benares and describes him as the greatest king of India, possessing the largest territory. Such a monarch could not be suffered to remain if Hindustan was to be subdued. So Muhammad marched against him in 1194 and the Rāthod fell like the Chauhān. 'When the two armies met there was great carnage; *the infidels sustained by their numbers and the Muslims by their courage*; but in the end the infidels fled and the faithful were victorious. The slaughter of the Hindus was immense; none was spared, except women and children, and the carnage of the men went on until the earth was weary.' Jayachandra met his fate like Harold at the battle of Hastings (1066 A.D.) being struck in the eye by a fatal arrow. The same result followed: like William the conqueror in England, Muhammad became king of Hindustan. But he had his Normandy in Afghanistan which interested him more than his new conquests; wherefore he left Hindustan more and more in the hands of his barons the Turki slaves. 'After the flight of the Hindus, Shihāb-ud-din entered Benares and carried off its treasures upon 1400 camels. He then returned to Ghazni.' Continuing, Ibn-al-Athir records with wonder,

'Among the elephants which were captured there was a white one. A person who saw it told me that when the elephants were brought before Shihab-ud-din and were ordered to salute, they all saluted except the white one!'

The fall of Jayachandra at Chandwār made Muhammad the master of the political as well as the religious capitals of Hindustan, Kanauj and Benares. There was little more to be done which would add to his prestige, and therefore after capturing Bayāna and receiving submission from Gwalior, that 'pearl of the necklace of the castles of Hind' (1196 A.D.), Muhammad turned his attention towards the north and west of his capital. During the next five years the two Ghūri brothers (Muhammad and Ghiyās-ud-dīn) had so much fighting to do against the Turks on their Persian frontiers that Muhammad had little leisure to spare for India, and "the northern provinces enjoyed a period of comparative repose, welcome to the troops after nine years' warfare, and beneficial to the country." Only, there was a rebellion at Ajmer fomented by the ruler of Anhilwārā which was promptly attended to by Aibak. A Muslim governor was placed over Pithaura's natural son who had been left in possession of Ajmer in 1192 A.D. Hemrāj the defeated rebel (a brother of Prithvirāja) perished on a pyre like Jayapāla, in 1194. Aibak led two expeditions against Rāja Bhīm of Anhilwārā; one in 1195 and another in 1197. On the former occasion he defeated and slew Kumār Pāla the commander of the army and looted Anhilwārā, thus avenging Muhammad's defeat in 1182. On the latter occasion he inflicted a more crushing defeat on Rāja Bhīm, when 15,000 men were slain and 20,000 taken captive, besides several elephants and much other booty. Anhilwārā was again devastated.

Another of Aibak's glorious exploits in the absence of his master was the reduction of the Chāndels of Central India. Their capital, Mahoba, was taken and the famous fortress of Kālinjar captured after a siege; 50,000 captives, male and female, were carried off as slaves together with enormous treasures; the temples were converted into mosques.

### *The Crescent Moves East :*

When Aibak was busy in the heart of Hindustan, another soldier of fortune, also a Turki slave, was engaged in reducing the eastern provinces of Bihar and Bengal for Muhammad Ghūri. This was

Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad, son of Bakhtiyar Khaljī, a curious specimen of the *genus homo* with his arms reaching up to the calves of his legs while standing erect. With these long arms he reached the easternmost parts of northern India. About 1197 he conquered Bihar and destroyed the last vestiges of Buddhism in that province, as the Arabs had done in Sind during the eighth century A.D. Then he proceeded into Bengal which fell in 1199 A.D. Let us listen to the familiar legend as told by Minhāj-us-Sirāj in the *Tabakāt-i-Nāsiri* :—

When Muhammad ibn Bakhtyar 'came back from his visit to Sultan, (?) Kutb-ud-din and conquered Bihar, his fame reached the ears of Rai Lakshmaniya (Lakshmana Sena of Bengal) and spread throughout all parts of the Rai's dominions. . . . Next year Muhammad ibn Bakhtyar prepared an army and marched from Bihar. He suddenly appeared before the city of Nudiya (Lakhnauti, Odantapuri) with only eighteen horsemen ; the remainder of his army was left to follow. . . . The people rather thought that he was a merchant who had brought horses for sale. In this manner he reached the gate of Rai Lakhmaniya's palace, when he drew his sword and commenced the attack. At this time the Rai was at his dinner, and golden and silver dishes filled with food were placed before him according to the usual custom. All of a sudden a cry was raised at the gate of his palace and in the city. Before he had ascertained what had occurred, Muhammad ibn Bakhtyar had rushed into the palace and put a number of men to the sword. The Rai fled barefooted by the rear of the palace, and his whole treasure and all his wives, maid servants, attendants and women fell into the hands of the invader. Numerous elephants were taken and such booty was obtained by the Muhammadans as is beyond all compute. When his army arrived the whole city was brought under subjection and he fixed his headquarters there.'

#### *Death of Shihāb-ud-dīn :*

When the work of consolidation and extension of his conquests was being thus carried on by his slaves, Muhammad Ghūri was, as we saw, busy fighting the Turks in his brother's dominions. The history of the Ghaznavids was to repeat itself. Muhammad was routed by the Turks at Andkhū in 1205 A.D., "a defeat which dealt a fatal blow at his military reputation in India." Rumours even spread in this country that the Sultan was killed. The Khokārs on the frontier were the first to be affected by this news. They rose in revolt and under their leader, Rāi Sāl, they defeated the deputy governor of Multan, plundered Lahore, and blocked the strategic road between the Punjab and Ghazni. Aibak's efforts having proved unequal to the

task in the face of persistent reports of Muhammad's death, the Sultan found it necessary to come in person. At the close of 1205 A.D. the combined forces of Muhammad and Aibak inflicted a crushing defeat on the Khokārs between the Jhelum and the Chenab. Besides slaughtering the enemy in large numbers, so many of them were captured alive that five Khokār slaves were sold for a *dirhām* in the camp. The victorious Sultan arrived in Lahore on 25 February 1206 A. D. and made arrangements for returning to Ghazni in order to resume his struggle against the Turks. But, unfortunately, on his way back, he was assassinated on the banks of the Indus by unknown hands—some say by the Chauhān Pithaura who was still alive, but this is *prima facie* absurd; others attribute it to the Ismaili heretics or more plausibly to the infuriated Khokārs. The body of the murdered Sultan was carried to Ghazni and buried in his capital. The same year (1206 A.D.) another Muhammad also died at the eastern end of his vast empire of Hindustan. Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn, not content with his conquests of Bihar and Bengal was lured by the frontier tribes into attempting the impossible. As we mentioned while dealing with the history of Assam (Ch. I), the Muslims tried to penetrate Tibet through the frontiers of Kāmrup and perished in the adventure. In the opinion of Sir Wolseley Haig, "This was the greatest disaster which had yet befallen the Muslim arms in India. Armies had been defeated, but Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn's force had been all but annihilated." Even the long arms of Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Muhammad could not reach over the Himalayas, and he died disgraced in Lakhnauti, all but the sole survivor of the disastrous expedition. According to some authorities he was murdered by a Khalji kinsman named Ali Mardān.

Two princes of the Ghūri family sat on the throne of Ghazni in quick succession, after Muhammad's death. But the real rulers of his empire were the four Turki slaves who had been placed in charge of the provinces while he was yet alive. Yildiz in Ghazni, Kubāchā in Multan, Aibak in Delhi, and Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn in Lakhnauti, would have ruled independently of each other, but for the masterful command of Aibak. Besides, Mahmūd, Shihāb-ud-dīn's successor at Ghazni, had sent him 'all the insignia of royalty,' as Ferishta states, 'a throne, a canopy, standards, drums, and the title of king (Sultan ?), being desirous of securing his interest, and being by no means able to oppose his power, if he refused to acknowledge him.'

Kubāchā was Aibak's son-in-law and gave the new sovereign of

Hindustan no trouble. Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn died in the subordinate position he had always acknowledged to Aibak. Āli Mardān, Ikhtiyār's alleged murderer, by force and guile succeeded as governor in the eastern provinces. But Yildiz alone challenged Aibak's sovereignty. In 1208 A.D. he descended from Ghazni and captured Multan. However, Aibak drove him back and retaliated by taking Ghazni itself. Elated by this success Aibak over-reached himself. His troops treated the citizens of the Imperial capital like those of any other conquered city, while Aibak regaled himself with copious wine. The people of Ghazni disgusted by these orgies called in Yildiz once again, and the first Slave king of Delhi precipitously withdrew to his own legitimate dominion. Early in November, 1210 A.D., falling from his horse while playing *Chaugān* (polo), Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak 'flew to heaven,' to use Babur's phrase describing the death of his own father.

#### *The Slave Dynasty :*

Compared with Mahmūd, Lane-Poole has remarked, the name of Muhammad Ghūri has remained obscure. "Yet his conquests in Hindustan were wider and far more permanent than Mahmūd's." Though a larger part of these conquests was partial, and there were still revolts to be crushed and chiefs to be subdued, 'from the days of Muhammad Ghūri to the catastrophe of the Indian Mutiny there was always a Muhammadan king upon the throne of Delhi.' As pointed out before, the credit of this achievement is due as much to Muhammad Ghūri's slaves as to his own initiative. Among these Aibak must rank with Babur as pioneer-founder of a great dynasty of rulers. Some of his successors might have added more glory to the empire as a whole, but the ground-work and example were Aibak's.

In the estimation of contemporary Muslim chroniclers, Aibak always acted 'in the ways of justice' and 'the people were happy.' The roads were freed from robbers and the Hindus both 'high and low were treated with royal benignity.' This, of course, did not preclude Aibak following the routine of Muslim conquerors in India, namely, enslaving, converting, destroying and looting as well as building mosques out of the ruins of Hindu temples. All this had become part of the military ritual of Islam. It followed as a matter of course in the wake of war. But once the 'collar of slavery' was fastened on the necks of the infidels taken in *jihād* the rest were rarely

interfered with provided they paid the *jizya*. His munificence earned for Aibak the name of *Lākh-bakhsh* or 'Giver of lacs.' At Delhi he built the great Jāmi Masjid and possibly began the construction of the Kutb Minār, completed by his successor Iltutmish. In short, he was a 'fighter in the way of God.' : he filled the realm with 'friends' and cleared it of 'foes' : 'His bounty was continuous, and so was his slaughter.'

#### *After Aibak :*

After Aibak, the first Slave king of Delhi (1206-10 A.D.), the 'dynasty' ruled over Hindustan for eighty years (1210-90 A. D.). There were only two outstanding figures during this period who made distinctive contribution to the crystallisation of Crescentdom in India. They were Shams-ud-dīn Iltutmish (1210-35 A.D.) and Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban (1266-87 A.D.). Besides these, there were seven other members of the 'dynasty' who sat on the throne of Delhi, though they cannot be described as having truly ruled. One of them, indeed, reigned as many as twenty years (Mahmūd Nāsir-ud-dīn, 1246-66 A.D.), but even under him the power behind the throne was Balban. Of the remaining six, with the singular exception of Sultānā Rāziyat-ud-dīn (1236-40 A.D.)—the only Muslim Queen who reigned of her own right at Delhi—all others were *rois fainéant*. The character of this period cannot be better described than in the vivid words of Zīā-ud-dīn Baranī who writes :

'During the thirty years from the death of Shams-ud-dīn (1236-66 A.D.), the incompetency of that monarch's sons and the overweening power of the *Shamsi* slaves had produced a vacillating, disobedient, self-willed feeling among the people, which watched for and seized upon every opportunity. Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government, and the source of the glory and splendour of states, had departed from the hearts of all men, and the country had fallen into a wretched condition.'

This was the outcome of not merely the political incompetency of the puppet princes who became pawns in the hands of ambitious adventurers at the capital, but also the result of rebellions in the provinces, both by the Hindus and the Muslim governors who sought to found independent dynasties of their own. It could not be otherwise during the age when power rested solely with those who had the strength to wield it. The Slaves came to rule not by hereditary or any other legal claim, but by the primal law of natural selection.

As Lane-Poole has well observed, "While a brilliant ruler's son is apt to be a failure, the slaves of a real leader of men have often proved the equals of their master. . . . the son is a mere speculation. He may or may not inherit his father's talents; even if he does, the very success and power of the father create an atmosphere of luxury that does not encourage effort. . . . On the other hand the slave is 'the survival of the fittest'; he is chosen for mental and physical abilities, and he can hope to retain his position, in his master's favour only by vigilant effort and hard service. Should he be found wanting his fate is sealed. Both Iltutmish and Balban were tyrants of the Greek type. They took opportunity by the forelock and established their dictatorships.

*Evolving Order out of Chaos :*

An abortive experiment was made on the death of Aibak to create a hereditary monarchy. But Aibak's son Ārām (a very significant name) proved a total failure. 'For the sake of restraining tumult, for the tranquillity of the commonalty and the content of the hearts of the soldiery', a more competent person was necessary. He was found in Iltutmish, the governor of Badāun, slave and son-in-law of Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak.

The task to which Iltutmish had been summoned (1211 A.D.) was by no means an easy one. Aibak had hardly made his authority felt over Hindustan when he suddenly died of an accident. Yildiz had recovered his sovereignty in Ghazni, and Kubāchā who had yielded to Aibak was not likely to submit to another slave. Bengal had been made to feel the weight of Aibak's personal authority, but its Khaljī governor, Āli Mardān Khān was in no mood to acquiesce in his successors' domination. Both east and west, therefore, the new Sultan of Delhi had to re-establish the power and prestige of his throne. Iltutmish was not unequal to this task. Before his death in 1235 A. D. he not merely succeeded in making himself master over his inheritance, but also rounded off the kingdom of Delhi by fresh conquests. Yildiz was defeated near the historic plain of Tarāin (1215 A.D.), taken prisoner and finally put to death; Kubāchā was nominally subdued in 1217 A. D. but continued in the charge of his province (Sind, Multan and west Punjab) until 1227 A.D. when his career was cut short by being drowned in the Indus. He was a thorn in the side of Iltutmish so long as he was alive.



Great trouble was caused in the eastern provinces of Bihar and Bengal by the intractable Khaljīs. On hearing of Aibak's death the erratic Āli Mardān Khān had declared himself independent with the title of Alā-ud-dīn. "To his own subjects he was a ruthless and bloody tyrant, and the Hindu rulers on his borders stood in such awe of him that the tribute with which they conciliated him filled his treasury." Within two years he earned a tyrant's death by such conduct. Iwāz who succeeded Āli Mardān tried to walk in his footsteps but submitted to Iltutmish in 1222 A.D. when Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd (Iltutmish's son) was appointed governor of Oudh, with another governor over Bihar. In spite of this, however, Iwāz once again rebelled in 1227 A.D., but was defeated and put to death by Mahmūd who occupied Lakhnauti and even won a victory over Britu, king of Kāmrūp (?). When Mahmūd died, in 1229 A.D., Balkā, a son of Iwāz, proclaimed himself king with the high-sounding title Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Daulat Shāh Balkā. Iltutmish marched against him, in 1230-31 A.D., and putting him to death, appointed Alā-ud-dīn Jānī governor of Bengal.

While returning from Bengal, Iltutmish put down (1232 A. D.) the recalcitrant Mangal Bhava Deva of Gwalior who had recovered his independence during the easy interlude of Ārām Shāh's régime. Then he invaded Mālwa, captured the fortresses of Bhilsa and Mandu and justified his title of Shams-ud-dīn ('Sun of the True Faith') by destroying and looting the ancient temple of Mahākālī in Vikramāditya's Ujjaini (1234 A.D.). Iltutmish did not long survive this campaign. An attempt was made on his life at Delhi by the fanatical sect of the Mulāhids; but Iltutmish died of an illness in his bed in 1236 A.D.

### *The Mongolian Maelstrom :*

Perhaps the greatest danger to which Hindustan had been exposed for years was that of the Mongols. They were Central Asian nomadic hordes which had been for a time welded into the greatest empire ever established by a single conqueror. Under the famous Chingiz (Jingiz) Khān, 1155-1227 A.D., they dominated over Tartary, China, and the Caspian Sea. India just escaped this Mongolian Maelstrom, though the barbarian flood broke on our frontiers, depositing its flot-sam and jetsam in western Punjab. Jalāl-ud-dīn, the Shāh of Khwarizm being driven out of Transoxiana, fell back on Afghanistan and

western Punjab seeking assistance from Iluttmish. But the discreet Sultan of Delhi, dreading the consequences, desisted. The desperate Shāh, being brought to bay, played havoc in the territories ruled over by Kubāchā. He was hotly pursued by Chingiz Khān and his uncouth barbarians who, however, found India too warm to attract them. Nevertheless, the Mongols continued to pester the Punjab for a generation or two until they were finally converted and absorbed into Muhammadan society. In their unregenerate form they were utter barbarians with a voice that rumbled like 'thunder in the mountains,' and hands that were powerful : like bears' paws,' able to 'break a man in two, as easily as an arrow may be broken.' Each of them would eat a sheep a day, and drink enormous quantities of *kumis* or fermented mare's milk ; and lie naked before immense braziers in winter, 'heedless of the cinders and sparks that fell on his body,' taking them for mere flea-bites. They treated the Muslims as the latter did the Hindus, burning, destroying and plundering their mosques and sacred things. They massacred men, women and children indiscriminately, and even disembowelled them to discover if they had swallowed any jewels. The poet Amir Khusrau describes touchingly how he suffered at their hands when once he had been taken captive by one of them.

'The Muslim martyrs,' he says, 'dyed the desert with their blood, while the Muslim captives had their necks tied together like so many flowers into garlands. I was also taken prisoner, and from fear that they would shed my blood, not a drop of blood remained in my veins. I ran about like water, here and there with innumerable blisters on my feet like bubbles on the surface of a stream. My tongue was parched and dry from excessive thirst and my stomach seemed to have collapsed for want of food. They left me nude like a leafless tree in winter or a flower that has been much lacerated by thorns. My Mongol captor sat on a horse like a lion bestriding the spur of a mountain ; a disgusting stench came out of his mouth, etc., and on his chin there grew, like a hyacinth, a tuft of hair. If through weakness I lagged a little behind, he would threaten me sometimes with his frying pan and sometimes with his spear. I sighed and thought that release from such a situation was quite impossible. But, thank God, I did regain my freedom without my breast being pierced by an arrow or my body cut into two by the sword.'

*'Aid of the Commander of the Faithful' :*

Iluttmish reigned just over a quarter century (1211-36 A.D.). His great predecessor Aibak had been created Sultan by his lawful sovereign at Ghazni in 1206 A.D. During the four

governor of Bhātinda, rebelled. The rock of offence was Sultānā Rāziya's Abyssinian favourite Yākūt (who played the Earl of Essex to this Queen Elizabeth). When Rāziya marched against Bhātinda accompanied by her favourite, the latter was assassinated and the Queen imprisoned. But the astute and romantic Rāziya seduced and captivated her captor, Altūniya, and she married him as the price of her liberty. They both then marched to Delhi to recover the lost authority. In the meanwhile, 'the Forty' had raised Rāziya's half-brother Bahrām to the throne. "There can be no doubt," according to Haig, "that the throne itself would ordinarily have been the prize of one of the Forty had not the jealousies of all prevented them from yielding preference to one. The Sultānā and her consort were again defeated and on the following day they were both murdered by the Hindus whom they had summoned to their assistance (14 Oct. 1240 A.D.). Thus ended the second experiment at Delhi to settle the succession by the choice of the Sultan. (The first was the failure of Aibak's son and successor Ārām Shāh.)

*From Bahrām to Balban :*

The next six years (1240-46 A.D.,) were full of turmoil. Bahrām, 'fearless, full of courage and sanguinary,' was himself assassinated by the king-makers within two years, and another puppet was found in Alā-ud-dīn Masūd, a grandson of Iltutmish. The latter too made his way to prison and death through the familiar path of tyranny and debauch (1242-46 A.D.). Disorders spread through the country. The Sultan all but lost Bihar and Bengal in the east, and Sind and Multan in the west, while the upper Punjab was wasted by the Mongols and occupied by the Khokārs. In the midst of this turmoil the debauched Masūd was deposed and his abstemious and pious uncle, Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd, was raised to the throne. This prince ruled for twenty years, 1246-66 A.D. The virtual ruler, the power behind the throne during this period, as stated before, was Balban. He was a Turki slave whom Iltutmish had purchased in Delhi after his Gwalior campaign (1232 A.D.). He was Sultānā Rāziya's chief huntsman. Under Bahrām and Masūd he had risen to be Lord Chamberlain and acquired the fiefs of Rewāri and Hānsi. Later he was entitled Ulugh Khān ('puissant lord') and gave his daughter in marriage to the Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd. He wielded such power and acquired such prestige as chief minister during the twenty years of the latter's

reign that he was designated his successor by Nāsir-ud-dīn and ascended the throne as a matter of course in 1266 A.D.

The personal history of Nāsir-ud-dīn could be briefly told. He continued to reign so long because he was too much pre-occupied with his own devotions to meddle with the government of Ulugh Khān. 'The steed of rule' was under the latter's 'bridle.' Many legends have grown round the name of the pious and amiable Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd. "The truth seems to be that the young king possessed the virtues of continence, frugality and practical piety, rare among his kind, and had a taste in calligraphy which led him to employ his leisure in copying the *Koran*, and that these merits earned for him exaggerated praise." Balban was dictator in all affairs of the state, except during a very short interlude.

#### *Balban's Dictatorship :*

'The falcon of dominion and power' being thus 'placed upon his sacred wrist,' Balban dominated Hindustan during forty years, from 1246-86 A.D. During half this time he was chief minister and for the rest sovereign Sultan. Already in 1245 A.D., he had earned a reputation for himself by driving the Mongols hip and thigh out of India after defeating them at Uch. His task was a threefold one : (1) to keep the Mongols away ; (2) to repress rebellious and scheming Muslim rivals ; and (3) to put down Hindu revolts. In all these he eminently succeeded.

The refractory Hindu Rājas were the first to feel the weight of Balban's arms. The fortress of Talsanda in Kanauj territory was captured after much fighting, in 1246 A.D. Then the country between Kara and Kālinjar was subdued. And finally, Rantambhor and Mewat were ravaged (1248 A.D.). The Hindus in the last named territory were the most difficult to repress, and they carried on their depredations against the Musalmans, off and on, for a long time. Ulugh Khān, before he became Sultan, led his last expedition against them in 1259 A.D. Then he gave vent to all the ferocity for which his reign was well known. Nearly 12,000 infidels were slaughtered indiscriminately ; 250 of their leaders were made to feel the chains of bondage ; and enormous booty including 21,00,000 *tankās* was brought to Delhi. Gwalior, Chanderi, Mālwa and Narwar had already been likewise treated in 1251-52 A.D.

A conspiracy was formed between Ulugh Khān's Muslim rivals to

over-throw the all too powerful minister. In 1253 A. D. they succeeded in winning over the credulous Sultan to their side. Balban was for the time being exiled to his fiefs of Rewāri and Hānsi, and his place, as chief minister, was usurped by the head of the conspirators, a Hindu convert named Raihan. This eclipse, however, did not continue for more than a year. Jealousy among Raihan's own followers, and the opposition of the Turki nobility, led to a powerful combination against the usurper. A formidable army of the *amirs* and *maliks* from all parts of the country was led by Balban in 1254 A.D. against Raihan, and the Sultan was compelled to restore Ulugh Khān to his old position. Raihan was sent back to his fief of Badāun.

In 1255 A.D. one last effort was made by the Muslim governors of Oudh and Sind to challenge the dictatorship of Balban. In league with some of the *amirs* and *maliks* at the capital, and a few disaffected Hindus, they sought to effect a junction. But their forces soon melted away. So did a Mongol invasion, under Nuyin Sari, in 1257 A.D. Two years later (1259 A.D.) an envoy was sent to Delhi by Chingiz Khān's grandson Halākū. He was received with great pomp and circumstance at a *darbār* presided over by the pious Sultan in person. After this we hear no more from contemporary chroniclers until we come to the accession of Balban himself as Sultan (1266 A. D.).

### *Balban the Doyen of Slaves :*

More than twenty years of distinguished service had made Balban the premier statesman as well as soldier in the kingdom. The Raihan episode had convinced Nāsir-ud-dīn of the indispensable character of Balban to the state. So, before his death in 1266 A.D., the Sultan had nominated Ulugh Khān his successor to the throne, there being no male heir of his body. Besides, there was no one else who was equally competent to deal with the difficult situation. Nāsir-ud-dīn, therefore, did justice both to his subjects and to his chief minister by nominating him sovereign successor. Balban more than justified his exaltation by his highly competent rule as Sultan during the next twenty years (1266-86 A.D.).

In the words of Zia-ud-dīn Baranī, author of *Tarikh-i-Firūz Shāhi*, 'when he attained the throne he imparted to it new lustre, he brought the administration into order, and restored to efficiency institutions whose power had been shaken or destroyed. The dignity and authority of government were restored, and his stringent rules and resolute determination caused all

men, high and low, "throughout his dominions, to submit to his authority. Fear and awe of him took possession of all men's hearts, but his justice and his consideration for his people won the favour of his subjects and made them zealous supporters of his throne.'

*Rule of 'Blood and Iron' :*

"Balban, the slave, water-carrier, huntsman, general, statesman, and Sultan," writes Lane-Poole, "is one of the most striking figures among many notable men in the long line of the kings of Delhi." This impression was burnt into the memories of men by Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban during the twenty years of his rule of 'blood and iron.' He was not devoid of softer feelings, for contemporary historians record many an anecdote about the Sultan being moved to tears. But the realist in him recognized the requirements of the age, and Balban sedulously cultivated just those qualities as were calculated to contribute to the success of his ambitious designs. He was a man who wrought up to his own patterns ; in this he spared neither himself nor others. Up to his accession he had not denied himself the lighter pleasures of life. But when he ascended the throne, he assumed a stern dignity that both awed and surprised his erstwhile peers. Barani's description of him presents us his correct picture :—

*Majesty :* 'Sultan Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban was a man of experience in matters of government. From being a *malik* he became a *khān*, and from a *khān* he became a king.... In the first and second year he assumed great state, and made great display of his pomp and dignity. Muslims and Hindus would come from distances of one or two hundred leagues to see the splendour of his equipage, which filled them with amazement. No sovereign had ever before exhibited such pomp and grandeur in Delhi. For the twenty-two years that Balban reigned he maintained the dignity, honour, and majesty of the throne in a manner that could not be surpassed. Certain of his attendants who waited on him in private assured me that they never saw him otherwise than full-dress. During the whole time that he was Khān and Sultan, extending over nearly forty years, he never conversed with persons of low origin or occupation, and never indulged in any familiarity, either with friends or strangers, by which the dignity of the Sovereign could be lowered. He never joked with any one, nor did he allow any one to joke in his presence ; he never laughed aloud, nor did he permit any one in his Court to laugh. As long as he lived no officer or acquaintance dared to recommend for employment any person of low position or extraction. In the administration of justice he was inflexible, showing no favour to his brethren or children, to his associates or attendants ; and if any of them committed an act of injustice, he never failed to give redress and comfort to the injured person. No man dared to be too severe to his slaves

or hand-maids, to his horsemen or footmen.'

*Justice* : An examination of a few relevant cases will show that Baranī does not exaggerate. Malik Baqbaq of Badāun was a great nobleman who maintained 4,000 horse. But when he flogged one of his servants to death, Balban caused him to be treated likewise and, in addition, hanged the news-writer of the place over the city-gate for having failed to report the crime. Similarly, Haibat Khān, the fief-holder of Oudh, was given five hundred stripes for slaying one of his own servants, in a drunken fit, and then handed over to the widow of the victim with the recommendation. "This murderer was my slave, he is now yours. Do you stab him as he stabbed your husband." The unfortunate nobleman purchased his life and freedom from the woman for a price of 20,000 *tankās*, and hid his head in shame for the rest of his life.

*Suppression of Robbery* : The same sternness and ruthlessness displayed themselves in the establishment of peace, order and security in the realm. For this purpose, in the very first year of his reign, 'the ripe judgment and experience of Balban was directed in the first place to the organisation of his army, *for the army is the source and means of government*. The cavalry and infantry, both old and new, were placed under the command of *maliks* of experience, of chiefs who held the first rank in their profession, and were brave, dignified and faithful.' The Meos of the Doab in particular had taken to very dangerous activities. They roved in huge gangs, like the Thugs six centuries later, and spread in all directions. Delhi itself was so much molested by them that the city-gates had to be closed after afternoon prayers. They stripped naked even the water-carriers and women who came to draw water from the great reservoirs within the city-walls. All through the country from Delhi to Bengal the roads and jungles were infested with robbers. In the year following his accession, therefore, Balban devoted himself heart and soul to their extirpation. The jungles were cleared, the Meos lurking in them put to death, forts were built and police outposts created in all the disturbed areas. In addition to this, as measures of precaution, the important towns and villages in the affected parts were granted as fiefs to powerful nobles. "Balban himself remained for many months in the districts of Patiyāli, Kampil, Bhojapur, and Jalālī, extirpated all highway robbers, built forts at those places, garrisoned them with Afghans, who received lands in their vicinity for their maintenance,

and by these measures secured the tranquillity of the roads between Delhi and Bengal for a century."

*Repression of Hindus* : When the Hindus of Katehar rebelled, in 1260 A.D., they were put down with such severity that 'The plain of Hauz Rāni and the gates of Delhi remembered no punishment like this, nor had one heard of such a tale of horror. By royal command many of the rebels were cast under the feet of elephants, and the fierce Turks cut the bodies of the Hindus in two. About a hundred met their death at the hands of the flayers, being skinned from head to foot ; their skins were all stuffed with straw, and some of them were hung over every gate of the city. The blood of the rioters ran in streams, heaps of the slain were seen near every village and jungle, and the stench of the dead even spread to the Ganges.' Males over eight years were killed and women carried into slavery. As a result of this holocaust and slaughter, the districts of Badāun, Amroha, Sāmbhal and Gannaur enjoyed the peace of death for thirty years. In 1268-69 A.D. again Balban raided the Salt Range, defeated and plundered the Hindus and captured so many horses that each animal sold in camp for 30 or 40 *tankās*. Balban distrusted the Hindus and never countenanced their employment in any office.

*The Mongols* : Though often defeated and driven out of India, the Mongol incursions never completely ceased. The reception accorded to their leader Halākū's envoy in the previous reign had indeed resulted in diplomatic exchanges between the Courts at Tabriz and Delhi, but this was only a truce. The menace of the Mongols being ever present on the north-west frontier, Balban had to maintain a formidable force in that region throughout his reign. At first he had placed his own cousin, Sher Khān Sunqar, in charge of the Punjab. But during his Salt Range campaign, described above, Balban discovered grave irregularities in the feudal arrangements of the frontier provinces, and replaced Sher Khān by his own sons, Princes Muhammad and Bughra Khān (1270 A.D.). Sher Khān having shown contumacious tendencies was recalled to Court where he died under suspicious circumstances ; it is suggested, poisoned at Balban's instance.

Prince Muhammad, the eldest son of Balban and heir-apparent to the throne, was a capable and enlightened governor. The poets Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan lived at his court. "In him were centred all the hopes of the stern old king ; for him the Forty were



doomed, and for him the blood of near kinsmen was shed... Before his departure he was formally designated heir-apparent and was invested with some of the insignia of royalty." But all this proved vain in the event ; for, though the Mongols had been beaten off in 1279 A.D., they again appeared in 1285. This time the Prince won a pyrrhic victory, as he was himself slain in ambush to the great sorrow of his father who thereafter always referred to him as the *Shahid* or martyr.

*Tughril's Revolt* : Bengal was the most intractable part of the empire. Lakhnauti, its capital, was known at Delhi as Balghākpūr or 'the city of rebellion.' Tughril, its governor, though a trusted slave of Balban, 'hatched the egg of ambition in his head,' finding his opportunity in the Sultan's illness in 1279 A.D. and the Mongol invasion of that year. He assumed royal insignia and had the *khutbah* read in his own name. Balban dispatched two generals, Amin Khān and Malik Targhi, in succession ; but both were defeated. Their armies were subdued with the gold no less than the arrows of the enemy. The infuriated Sultan, in his paroxysm of rage, ordered the defeated generals to be hanged over the gales of Ajodhya. and prepared to take the field in person. Though the rains had commenced, Balban accompanied by his younger son Bughra Khān, sailed down the Jamuna and the Ganges with a large fleet of boats. By the time he was in Oudh his army numbered 200,000. Tughril, getting reports of this, sought refuge in flight. He fled from Lakhnauti, with his army and most of the inhabitants, to Jājnagar (modern Orissa). There he was pursued and brought down by the arrows of a small reconnoitring party under Malik Muqaddir who gained by this adventure the title of *Tughril-Kush*, or 'the slayer of Tughril'. Then followed reprisals that shocked even the generation that had got accustomed to Balban's rule of 'blood and iron.' The two miles bazar street of Lakhnauti was lined with stakes on either side on which were impaled the bodies of the unfortunate rebels and their families. Other atrocities followed and having glutted his revenge, Balban called his son Bughra Khān to witness the shambles, and addressed these memorable words to him : "Understand me, and forget not, that if the governors of Hind or Sind, Mālwa or Gujarat, Lakhnauti or Sonārgaon, shall draw the sword and become rebels to the throne of Delhi, then such punishment as has fallen upon Tughril and his dependants will fall upon them, and their wives and children, and all their

adherents." The renegades and suspects in the Delhi army just escaped this fate on their return to the capital (1282 A.D.) owing to the intercession of the old *Kotwāl* of Delhi. Bughra Khān was left behind in charge of the province of Bengal where he and his descendants continued to rule till 1339 A.D.

### *Dénouement of the Dynasty :*

While the descendants of Balban thus endured for half a century longer in a province that had ever proved refractory, at Delhi itself Balban's successors were overthrown in the course of less than five years after the death of the greatest Sultan of the Slave Dynasty. Balban himself died in 1286 A. D., within a year of Prince Muhammad's catastrophic end. The octogenarian Sultan, though he stoically went through all the business of the state in public after this, is said to have been so much affected that he tore his garments and threw dust on his head in utter sorrow when he was alone. Before he breathed his last, however, he nominated Bughra Khān, as his successor. But that indolent and sensual prince shirked the responsibility, and the disappointed father finally left the throne to the 'Martyr Prince' Muhammad's youthful son Kaikhusrau. Nevertheless, affairs at Delhi could not be so easily settled. No sooner were the aged Sultan's eyes stilled in death, than the Turki nobles raised another callow youth, Kaikubād (son of Bughra Khān), to the throne. Brought up under the iron restraints of his grandfather, Kaikubād utilised his elevation to degrade himself and the nobility. Orgies of all kinds of sensual indulgence became the routine at Court, and Malik Nizām-ud-dīn, a nephew of the influential *Kotwāl* of Delhi, usurped all real power. Kaikhusrau, the heir-designate of Balban, was murdered in cold blood. Likewise were a number of nobles of the *ancient régime* executed under various charges. Khwāja Khatīr *vezir* of the Sultan himself did not escape humiliation ; seated on an ass he was paraded through the streets of the capital.

Such insensate tyranny could not continue for long, however. Nemesis came in the shape of a Mongol raid. Under their leader Tamar Khān of Ghazni, they harried the Punjab and plundered Lahore. But the existence of Balban's efficient army saved Delhi. The 'New Muslims', as the converted Mongols were called, who had settled in the vicinity of Delhi were massacred by way of reprisals. In the wake of this, even the listless Bughra Khān from Bengal mar-

ched to Delhi with a large army, ostensibly 'to pay homage to the Sultan' but really to rescue his son from the tyranny of Nizām-ud-dīn. When he had to leave the capital disappointed, touchingly he took leave of Kaikubād and sighed as he left saying, "Alas ! I have seen the last of my son, and the last of Delhi." Events very soon proved these gloomy anticipations. Faction fights arose between the Turks and the Khaljīs. Nizām-ud-dīn was himself dismissed and poisoned, and the wretched Kaikubād, stricken with paralysis (the natural consequence of his excesses), was kicked to death by one of the soldiers as he lay helpless in his palace. The last of the Slave family to reign at Delhi thus died the death of a slave. His body was unceremoniously rolled up in his bed and thrown into the Jamuna. The throne was seized by Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī who was *Ariz-i-mamālik* or Muster Master of the army. He was crowned at Kilughari, on 13 June 1290, entitled Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Shāh Khaljī. A new dynasty came into power at Delhi, destined to carry Muslim conquest a stage further, into South India, in the course of the next thirty years.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 712       | Arab invasion of Sind.  |
| 1001      | Mahmūd of Ghazni's first invasion of India.   |
| 1186      | Muhammad Ghūri overthrew the last Ghaznavid at Lahore.  |
| 1206-10   | Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak the first Slave Sultan at Delhi.  |
| 1221-22   | Chingiz Khān's invasion of India.   |
| 1240      | Mongols hold all Russia tributary.  |
| 1258      | Destruction of Bagdad by Halākū.  |
| 1260-94   | Kubla Khān, Halākū's brother, rules from Hungary to China.  |
| 1271-96   | Travels of Marco Polo.  |
| 1286      | Death of Balban, the greatest Slave King.   |
| 1290      | Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī's accession.  |
| 1296-1307 | Repeated Mongol incursions in the Punjab.   |
| 1303      | Sack of Chitor by Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī.  |
| 1310-11   | Malik Kāfur carried Muslim arms to Madura and Ramesvaram (?).   |
| 1318      | End of the Yādava kingdom of Deogiri ; Harapāla flayed alive.<br>Four Franciscans burnt for heresy at Marseilles. |

## CHAPTER V

### FIRST EMPIRE OF THE CRESCENT : KHALJI

#### *Clemency King Fīrūz :*

The septuagenarian chief who ascended the throne at Kilughari on 13 June 1290 was too soft and saintly to keep the crown for long. He belonged to a tribe which, having been long settled in Afghanistan and India, was hated by the other Turks of more recent immigration. The fiery warriors who surrounded him could not understand the lacrymose old man when he shed a flood of tears as he entered the Red Palace and apostrophised on the hollowness of royalty and his own unworthiness. However, he made up for the disappointment thus caused, by a lavish disbursement of titles and honours among his courtiers and relations, and by building up a new city (*Shahr-i-nau*) at Kilughari. In the conferment of favours he did not also fail to conciliate the Turks who had opposed his accession. Malik Chajju, Balban's nephew, for example, was given charge of the fief of Kara-Manikpur. But before a few months had passed it became more and more evident that Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz was already in the grip of senility. He was too clement to be king in an age when 'blood and iron' alone could tell. He was soon overtaken by a whirlwind of troubles that ended, not only by removing the crown from his head, but also the head from his shoulders.

The first to take advantage of the Sultan's weakness was the scion of the old dynasty who had been given a fief instead of the usual halter. Malik Chajju declared himself Sultan at Kara and had the *Khutbah* read in his own name assuming the title of Mughis-ud-dīn (1291 A. D.). Not content with this he marched towards Delhi to recover the throne of his family. Round his banner rallied the *rāwats* and *Pāiks* of Hindustan 'like ants and locusts'. But the heroism of the aged Sultan's son, Arkāli Khān, triumphed over the rebels who were defeated and brought into Jalāl-ud-dīn's presence 'with yokes upon their shoulders, their hands tied behind their necks, covered with dust and dirt, and their garments all soiled. Fīrūz on seeing their helpless humiliation melted into tears, commended their

loyalty to the late dynasty, and treated them as royal guests. The arch-rebel, Malik Chajju, was sent to Multan with generous gifts of food and raiment, fruit and wine !

The clemency of Fīrūz reached its climax ~~when~~ he treated robbers and *thugs* as he had treated the rebels. When they were caught in their thousands and brought before the Sultan, they were sermonised on the evils of theft, warned not to do it again, and dumped into Bengal in boats down the Ganges.

When the Sultanate was drifting on to the shoals like this, some of the more far-seeing nobles, like Ahmad Chāp the Chamberlain, conferred together ; the more irascible ones, like Tāj-ud-dīn Kuchi, offered to cut old Jalāl-ud-dīn like a cucumber and usurp the throne. When these confabulations caught the ear of the aged Sultan, however, they were pardoned and warned that if they persisted they would be made over to the more relentless Arkāli Khān.

To make up for such lenity the senile Sultan caught the wrong tartar to make an example of. When the *derwish* Sidi Maula, a disciple of the famous Sheikh Farid-ud-dīn Ganj-i-Shakar of Pāk Pātan, was implicated in a plot to murder Sultan Fīrūz, like Henry II of England a century earlier, Jalāl-ud-dīn cried out in anger, 'Oh *Der-vishes*, will none of you rid me of this Maula !' Instantly Sidi Maula met the fate of Thomas à Becket. A famine which followed was attributed by the credulous to the sacrilege of the Sultan.

The military conduct of this king was not more satisfying to the martial nobility. He did indeed lead an expedition or two, in the year of his accession (1290 A. D.), but he covered his inability to conquer with the pious camouflage that he valued the lives of the Musalman soldiers more than any forts of the infidels. He 'destroyed the idol temples and broke and burnt the idols' at Jhāin, but turned back from the more renowned Rantambhor in the face of determined Rajput resistance. Two years later (1292 A.D.) he encountered the Mongols under Abdulla, a grandson of Halākū. After inflicting a defeat on them, he allowed them to settle in the neighbourhood of Delhi. He built quarters for them and gave his daughter in marriage to one of their leaders, a reputed grandson of Chingiz Khān.

#### *Fall of Fīrūz :*

Such, in brief, was the character of Sultan Jalāl-ud-dīn Fīrūz Khaljī during his six years' reign. In 1296 A.D. he fell a victim to

his own nephew and son-in-law, the ambitious Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, whom he had appointed to the fief of Kara after the suppression of Malik Chajju's revolt. In 1292 A.D. Alā-ud-dīn invaded Mālwa and brought much booty from Bhilsa, which he craftily laid at the feet of the Sultan at Delhi. For this he was rewarded by the addition of Oudh to his fief of Kara. Encouraged by this Alā-ud-dīn undertook another "exploit as daring and impudent as any recorded in history." In 1294 A. D. with a bare 8,000 horse he led his famous expedition to Deogiri in the Deccan. There he wrought upon the Yādava king Rāmachandra, much as Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn Khaljī had done over Lakshmaṇa Sena at Lakhnauti in 1202 A.D. Despite the heroic resistance of the Yādava crown-prince, Shankerdeo, Deogiri (Daulatābād) was successfully stormed, and the Rāja was compelled to surrender Elichpur. The conqueror extorted such booty from the vanquished that his camels and pack-horses groaned under its weight as they laboured back to Kara. The indemnity alone amounted to 17,250 pounds of gold, 200 pounds of pearl, 58 pounds of other gems, besides 28,250 pounds of silver and 1000 pieces of silk.

When the doting Fīrūz heard of this incredible venture he hurried to Kara to congratulate his nephew, against all counsels of his discerning chamberlain Ahmad Chāp. There, in 1296 A.D. Alā-ud-dīn perpetrated "one of the basest murders in history" and proclaimed himself Sultan. The kind-hearted and unsuspecting Jalāl-ud-dīn was assassinated by hirelings just when he had stooped to lift up his dissimulating nephew who pretended to bow low in homage before him.

### *A Reign of Terror and Bounty :*

Treachery, terror and bounty are the aptest words in which to sum up the character of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī's reign of twenty years (1296-1316 A.D.). It began in treachery, thrived in bounty, and ended in terror.

Arkālī Khān being in Multan at the time of his father's murder, his younger brother Ibrāhīm was proclaimed at Delhi as Sultan Rukn-ud-dīn. But Alā-ud-dīn quickly marched upon the capital with an enormous army of 60,000 horse and 60,000 foot. The supporters of Ibrāhīm were soon put to flight. They gathered at Multan only to be hotly pursued, captured, blinded, imprisoned or killed by the new ruler's officers. Alā-ud-dīn, "having gained the throne by an act of

treachery and ingratitude seldom equalled even in oriental annals, conciliated the populace by a lavish distribution of his southern gold." As he entered his new capital he literally rained gold and silver coins among a greedy populace. 'The throne was now secure,' Barani tells us, 'and the magistrates and the chief men of the city came out to Alā-ud-dīn, and a new order of things was established. His wealth and power were great; so whether individuals paid their allegiance or whether they did not, mattered little, for the *khutbah* was read and the coins were struck in his name.'

But the philosophic historian does not also fail to observe, 'Although Alā-ud-dīn reigned successfully for some years, and all things prospered to his wish, and though he had wives and children, family and adherents, wealth and grandeur, still he did not escape retribution for the blood of his patron. He shed more innocent blood than ever Pharaoh was guilty of. Fate at length placed a betrayer in his path, by whom his family was destroyed, and the retribution that fell upon it never had a parallel in any infidel land.'

#### *The Mongols Again :*

Though the usurper's crime had been hushed in gold the ever-recurring Mongol flood had not stopped. In the second year of Alā-ud-dīn's reign they came again, 100,000 of those 'fiery sons of the devil' under their leader Amir Daud, ruler of Transoxiana. But Ulugh Khān, the Sultan's son-in-law who had been appointed to the western provinces, proved equal to the situation. The Mongols were driven with heavy losses. Yet did they persist. A second invasion came, under the leadership of Saldi, but only to be beaten again. Saldi was captured with 2,000 followers and sent to Delhi in chains. Instead of the weak and senile Jalāl-ud-dīn this time there was seated on the throne of Hindustan the stern and determined Alā-ud-dīn. But it was sometime before the Mongols felt the difference. In 1299 A.D. they swarmed in like locusts, in countless numbers, and threatened to deluge the Punjab to the very gates of the capital. Alā-ud-dīn was confronted with an appreciable crisis, and he took the field in person, with 12,000 tried warriors, and assisted by two experienced officers, Ulugh Khān and Zafar Khān. Both of these captains had borne the brunt of earlier Mongol raids and Zafar Khān, in particular, had a reputation for being the Rustam of his age. The barbarians were routed with such heavy casualties on this occasion that, though Zafar

Khān was ambushed and killed, they remembered with horror his prowess for generations. Contemporary records say that if their horses refused to drink at a stream the Mongols would ask them if they had seen Zafar Khān !

Nevertheless, their incorrigible wander-lust lured them again and again to the Indus. In 1304 A.D. they even ventured to cross the Siwaliks and raided Amroha. Encouraged by success they led a formidable incursion into the Punjab in 1307 A.D. But they were repulsed with great severity by Ghāzi Tughlak, who caught hold of their leaders, and had them trampled under the feet of elephants. After this Alā-ud-dīn adopted the policy of Balban and, as permanent measures of security, created strong military outposts, fortifying places lying on the path of the Mongols, like Dipālpur and Samana. A large number of the invaders had settled from time to time in the vicinity of the capital and, as stated before, were known as 'the New Muslims.' Their attitude and conduct having been found contumacious 20,000 to 30,000 of them were exterminated in a day. Owing to 'the crafty cruelty' of the new Sultan, according to Baranī, not even their women and children were spared. 'Up to this time no hand had ever been laid upon wives or children on account of men's misdeeds.'

*'A Second Alexander' :*

Alā-ud-dīn was not more cruel and crafty than ambitious. To secure the objects of his desire he would stop short of nothing, and his ambition was unlimited. If there was ever a prince who never felt a moral scruple it was Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī. He wanted to be a second Alexander, though he lacked that great conqueror's essential nobility of character. For this he murdered his patron, uncle and father-in-law ; for this he plundered Deogiri ; for this he extirpated the Mongols. And for this also he exterminated, not only the heirs of his predecessor, but all those Jalāli nobles who had accepted his gold and transferred their allegiance to him. Those who had once proved treacherous might do so again. Then he turned heart and soul to conquest. We shall presently witness how Anhilwārā, Chitor, Ujjain, Wārangal, Dwārasamudra, and Madura were subdued. The fate of the rulers of these places was, however, far different from that of Porus when Alexander conquered.

*Gujarat :* Ulugh Khān and Nasrat Khān were sent to Gujarat. Though Anhilwārā had been twice looted by Aibak, Gujarat had not



been subdued. Somnāth was again plundered after two hundred and seventy years (1297 A.D.). The idol which had been reinstated since its desecration in 1025 A.D. was once more uprooted and sent to Delhi as a trophy. There were other idols besides, which were perhaps better appreciated by the Sultan. Kamal Devi, the wife of Rāja Karaṇ who had fled with his beautiful daughter, Deval Devi, to Deogiri, fell into the impious hands of the conquerors. She too was despatched to Delhi to feed the insatiable lust of Alā-ud-dīn. But the greatest prize of all was bagged in the *hazār-dīnārī* slave, Malik Kāfur, who was a eunuch. The autocrat liked him for his beauty and kept him as his vile favourite until he discovered in him a great conqueror. Malik Kāfur was destined to play the rôle of Aibak and Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn to Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, for he extended Muslim conquests to the utmost corners of South India. But he also lived to eclipse the Sultan and ruin the Khaljī dynasty. Meantime Ulugh Khān and Nasrat Khān proceeded to Cambay and levied heavy black-mail from its wealthy merchants and took away a vast treasure. A scramble for its appropriation resulted in a mutiny, especially among the New Muslims in the army, followed by reprisals hardly paralleled in history. Nusrat Khān's brother was murdered, and 'in revenge,' writes Baranī, 'he ordered the wives of the assassins to be dishonoured and exposed to most disgraceful treatment; he then handed them over to vile persons to make common strumpets of them. The children he caused to be cut to pieces on the heads of their mothers.' Outrages like these, Baranī comments with disgust, 'are practised in no religion or creed. These and similar acts of his filled the people of Delhi with amazement and dismay, and every bosom trembled.'

*Rajputāna* : Two years after the conquest of Gujarat Alā-ud-dīn turned towards Rajputāna (1299 A.D.). The interval was partly taken up with the Mongols in the Punjab and partly with other activities. Meanwhile, with increasing successes, the Sultan was getting more ambitious every year. In the words of Baranī,—

'In the third year of his reign Alā-ud-dīn had little to do beyond attending to his pleasures, giving feasts, and holding festivals. One success followed another; dispatches of victory came in from all sides; every year he had two or three sons born; affairs of state went on to his satisfaction, his treasury was overflowing, boxes and caskets of jewels and pearls were daily displayed before his eyes, he had numerous elephants in his stables and 70,000 horses in the city and environs....All this prosperity intoxicated:

him....In his conceit, ignorance, and folly, he completely lost his balance, formed utterly impossible schemes, and cherished the wildest desires.'

While in his cups, Alā-ud-dīn felt like emulating the exploits of the Great Macedonian. Nay, he felt inspired to play the rôle of the Prophet himself. In Ulugh Khān, Nasrat Khān, Zafar Khān and Alp Khān he discovered the parallel of Muḥammad's four lieutenants, Abu Bekr, Usman, Umar, and Ali. But his candid adviser, Alā-ul-Mulk, *Kotwāl* of Delhi, dispelled all his hallucinations. "Religion and law," he told the Sultan, "spring from heavenly revelation ; they are never established by the plans and designs of men. . . The prophetic office has never appertained to kings, and never will, so long as the world lasts, though some prophets have discharged the functions of royalty." Then Alā-ul-Mulk pointed out how Chingiz Khān, although he made rivers of blood flow in Muslim cities, could not establish Mongol religion or institutions among the Muslims : "Many Mongols have turned Musalmans, but no Musalman has ever become a Mongol." Likewise did he tell Alā-ud-dīn, "these are not the days of Alexander, and where will there be found a *vezir* like Aristotle?" So he exhorted the Sultan rather to complete the unfinished task of subduing Hindustan, than indulge in extravagant fancies impossible of accomplishment. Above all he boldly urged, "What I have recommended can never be accomplished unless your Majesty gives up drinking to excess, and keeps aloof from convivial parties and feasts."

Alā-ud-dīn in his sober moments had the good sense to follow this wholesome advice. The campaign in Rajputāna was the first fruit of a more realistic policy. It opened with the siege of Rantambhor (1299-1301 A.D.). This renowned fortress had been seized several times, the last by Jalāl-ud-dīn, only to be lost betimes. Now the heroes of the Gujarat campaign, Ulugh Khān and Nasrat Khān, were despatched for its conquest. But, after the capture of Jhāin on the way, Nasrat Khān was killed in action at the siege of Rantambhor. Rāṇa Hamīr and his brave Rajputs valiantly defended the stronghold, and reinforcements being felt necessary Alā-ud-dīn himself marched to assist his brother. Though very much distracted by a series of revolts, in his camp, in his capital, and elsewhere, the determined Sultan persisted and was rewarded with success in the end. In July 1301 the fortress fell, the Rāṇa and his family were put to death (or killed themselves according to other accounts), and the palaces

and other buildings were razed to the ground. Finally, following his policy begun at Delhi, Rajmal, renegade minister of Hamir, and others who had betrayed their master, were also punished with death. "It was characteristic of Alā-ud-din", observes Sir Wolseley Haig, "to avail himself of the services of traitors and then to punish them for the treason by which he had profited."

Next came the turn of Mewar (1302-03 A.D.). Alā-ud-din was lured to Chitor both by the itch for conquest and lust for its far-famed queen Padmini. The details of this campaign and the heroic strategy of the Rāṇi that foiled the Sultan of his long coveted quarry, are a part of the familiar epic of Rājasthān. The Rāṇa was betrayed into captivity, and offered his freedom on the ransom of his beautiful queen. No greater challenge to Rajput honour could have been given. The resourcefulness of the Rāṇi, or her daughter, came to the rescue. A contingent of armed Rajputs was demanded for escorting the ladies to the enemy's camp. They accomplished instead the unsuspected purpose of rescuing the Rāṇa back to his capital. Then followed a holocaust in which the chivalry of Rājasthān perished ere the Mlechcha could pollute a drop of noble Kshatriya blood.

"The funeral pyre was lighted within the 'great subterranean retreat', in chambers impervious to the light of day, and the defenders of Chitor beheld in procession the queens, their own wives and daughters, to the number of several thousands...conveyed to the cavern, and the opening closed upon them, leaving them to find security from dishonour in the devouring element."

Chitor was taken, Alā-ud-din's son, Khizr Khān, was put in charge of it, and the fortress was renamed Khizrābād (Monday, 26 August 1303). 30,000 Hindus were massacred. But the sensual prince could not hold the place beyond 1311 A.D., and Alā-ud-din was obliged to replace him by Maldeo, a Rajput chief of the Sonigra clan. Even this arrangement proved a failure, for, seven years later, Rāṇa Hamir recovered the ancient stronghold of his ancestors.

*Mālwa* : The subjugation of Rajputāna was followed by that of Mālwa (1305 A.D.). Māndu, Ujjain, Dhāra, Chānderi, etc. were soon compelled to accept the suzerainty of the Sultan of Delhi. In the opinion of Tod, the entire Agnikula race of Rajputs—the Solānkis, Paramārs, Parihārs, etc.—was overturned by Alā-ud-din, from Anhilwārā to Deogiri.

*The Crescent in South India :*

*Deogiri* : In 1306-7 A.D. another expedition was made to Deogiri on the ostensible ground of recovering from Rāja Rāmachandra the revenues of Elichpur which had not been paid for three years. But the real object was the capture of another *houri* for the royal *harem* at Delhi, viz., Deval Devi, the daughter of Rāja Karaṇ of Anhilwārā, who had sought refuge in the Yādava stronghold, during Ulugh Khān's Gujarat campaign in 1297 A.D. Alp Khān, who was in charge of Gujarat, and Malik Kāfur, the *hazār-dināri*, who was now *Naib* or Deputy of the Kingdom, were entrusted with this houri-hunting campaign. To cut a long story short, the coveted prize was secured by Alp Khān who dispatched her to Delhi where she was married to the worthless Khizr Khān. Malik Naib (Kāfur) marched to Deogiri, secured the person of Rāja Rāmachandra, sent him to the Sultan, and appointed a Muslim governor over Elichpur to obviate future troubles. However, Alā-ud-dīn for once showed magnanimity towards the captive Rāja, perhaps out of superstitious regard for his vicarious benefactor, and allowed the Yādava to return to his capital with the honour of being made a *Rāi-rāyān* ('chief of chiefs').

*Telingana* : The victorious Malik Kāfur was dispatched against Wārangal in 1309 A.D. One previous attempt in that direction had proved abortive on account of the sudden death of Alā-ud-dīn's brother, Ulugh Khān, who was to conduct it. But the object of this campaign was plunder or tribute more than extension of dominion. In all the other conquered provinces, Gujarat, Rajputāna, Mālwa, and Elichpur, Muslim governors had been appointed. But now Alā-ud-dīn's instructions were specific. 'If the Rāi consented to surrender his treasure and jewels, elephants and horses, and also to send treasure and elephants in the following year, Malik Kāfur was to accept these terms and not press the Rāi too hard... If he could not do this, he was, for the sake of his own name and fame, to bring the Rāi with him to Delhi.' Malik Kāfur was helped *en route* by the then loyal Hindu feudatory of Deogiri, and as he marched from Deogiri to Wārangal the *hazār-dināri* wasted the land with fire and sword driving its inhabitants before him. Unable to withstand this fury the Rāja of Wārangal, Pratāparudradeva II Kākatiya (Rai Ladar Deo the Muslim historians call him) surrendered 300 elephants, 7000 horses, and vast quantities of coined money and jewels, with

the further promise of an annual tribute. The Muslims lumbered back to Delhi with the weight of this enormous booty.

*Dwārasamudra* : Like Mahmūd of Ghazni before him, the cupidity of the conqueror increased in proportion to the wealth that each campaign brought in. The easy success won in Telingana tempted Malik Kāfur to browse farther afield. The next, and his last, expedition was directed against the Hoysala capital, Dwārasamudra or Dwāravatipura (Halébid in Mysore). Possibly, on account of the increasing hostilities between the Hoysalas and the Yādavas, the invader was incited by the already subdued Yādava prince, to destroy the southern city. Malik Kāfur appeared in force before Dwārasamudra in 1310 A.D. Its ruler Vīra Ballāla III offered but feeble resistance. He was taken captive and sent to Delhi. His temples and palaces were plundered and destroyed, yielding the usual treasures.

*Madura* : The victor was drawn into the Pāndya kingdom by internal squabbles between two rival princes. Sundara Pāndya the legitimate but younger son of Kulashekhara, having killed his father, was challenged by Vīra Pāndya his natural but elder brother. The former, being driven out, invited the Muslims to interfere. Malik Kāfur, too ready to profit by the opportunity, plundered Madura, and culminated his great campaign by founding mosques in this extreme end of the peninsula. The treasures that were looted might have made Mahmūd turn in his grave at Ghazni with wistful eyes. Malik Naib, according to Sir Wolsley Haig, left Madura on 24 April 1211 and reached Delhi on 18 October of the same year, with spoils including 312 elephants, 20,000 horses, 2,750 pounds of gold, equal in value to 100,000,000 *tankās*, and chests of *jewels*. "No such booty had ever before been brought to Delhi : the spoils of Deogiri could not compare with those of Dwāravatipura and Madura, and the king, when receiving the leaders of the expedition in the Palace of the Thousand Pillars at Sirī, distributed largesse to them and to the learned men of Delhi with a lavish hand."

*Ma'bar or Malabar* ? The exact limits of Malik Kāfur's South Indian campaign are hard to determine. The term Ma'bar used by Muslim writers has been applied to the east coast extending from 'Kulam to Nilāwar,' i.e., from Quilon to Nellore. There could be no difference of opinion about the identity of the former place. But the identification of the latter (Nilāwar) with Nellore on the Coromandel coast cannot be established with certainty. The following note by

Lane-Poole (*Medieval India*, p. 114) is worthy of the best consideration :—

“ Kāfur founded a mosque on the coast. If it was the same mosque ‘ Built by the officers of Sultan Ala-ud-din ’ at ‘ Seeta Bunda Ramessar, ’ which Firishta says was repaired by the Bahmanid Sultan Mujahid about 1378, it must have been on the Malabar coast or west of India. ‘ Ramessar ’ cannot be Ramesvara which is on the Coromandel coast opposite Ceylon. ‘ Cape Ramas, south of Goa, as suggested by Briggs, seems a more probable identification. Ma’bar, which Wassaf defines as extending from Kulam (Quilon) to Nilawar (Nileswara) has usually been identified with the Coromandel or east coast. But this Persian traveller, who wrote about 1300, not only defines Ma’bar as above stated, but describes it immediately after Gujarat, and states that Persian horses were exported ‘ to Ma’bar, Kambayat (Cambay), and other ports in their neighbourhood ’ (Elliot and Dowson, iii, 33). The fact that Kāfur marched on to Ma’bar from Dvara-Samudra agrees with Wassaf’s definition.”

There are two places in the South Kanara District bearing the names Nilāwar and Nileschwara respectively. That Malik Kāfur went past Kadūr where he encountered a few Māplās makes it probable that one of these places on the west coast was meant by Wassāf rather than Nellore on the east coast. Sir Wolseley Haig writes, “ An interesting fact recorded of the expedition into the kingdom of Dvāravatipura is the encounter of Malik Naib’s army at Kadūr with some Moplahs, who are described as half Hindus, and lax in their religious observances, but as they could repeat the *Kalima*, or symbol of Islam, their lives were spared ”, (*The Cambridge History of India*, III, p. 116).

#### *Last of the Deccan :*

The imperialistic detour of the Khaljī commander was rounded off with a final stroke against Shankerdeo of Deogiri, who being a doubtful friend was worse than an open enemy. On the ground of default in tribute, Malik Kāfur for the last time marched into the territories of the Yādavas in 1312 A.D. The loyalist Rāmachandra, to use the Yavana phrase, had already ‘ gone to hell.’ Shankerdeo had been always refractory. He was now defeated and beheaded. The important fortresses of Gulburga, Rāichūr and Mūdgal were captured, and the whole country between the Krishna and Tungabhadra was subdued. Six years later, Shankerdeo’s successor, Harapāla, rebelled against Mubārak, the then reigning Sultan at Delhi (1318 A.D.). The last of the Khaljīs treated the last of the Yādavas more barbarously

*Remedies against Rebellion :*

These successive revolts convinced Alā-ud-dīn that something drastic should be attempted to remedy this state of affairs. His analytic brain discovered four causes of chronic contumacy : (1) the neglect of *espionage* which should keep him always alert whatever might happen in any part of the kingdom ; (2) the habit of drinking wine without let or hindrance ; (3) frequent intercourse between the nobles and leaders of society which bred conspiracy ; and (4) unchecked growth of private property which afforded sufficient leisure to hatch mischievous plots against the ruler. Alā-ud-dīn was a stern realist who, once convinced of a course of action, pursued it relentlessly so far as the logic of facts permitted. "To prevent rebellion in which thousands perish," he declared, "I issue such orders as I conceive to be for the good of the state, and the benefit of the people. Men are heedless, disrespectful, and disobey my commands ; I am then compelled to be severe to bring them into obedience... *I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful ; whatever I think to be for the good of the state, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree*, and for what may happen to me on the approaching Day of Judgment that I know not."

*Secularisation of the State :*

Such *secularism* as is reflected in the above enunciation of Alā-ud-dīn's attitude in matters of State, and the other dialogues between him and Kāzī Mughis-ud-dīn, recorded by Baranī, is surprising in a Muslim ruler of the thirteenth century. A devotee of *real politic* though he was, Alā-ud-dīn had not drifted completely from the theocratic moorings of Islamic society. Although he was a powerful monarch and could hold his own against any Asiatic ruler, Dr. Tripathi observes, Alā-ud-dīn "did not assume any title higher than 'Sikandar' and continued to style himself 'Yamīn-ul-Khilāfat Nāṣiri Amīr-ul-Muminīn.'" That a monarch enjoying so much power and prestige should choose to call himself a lieutenant of the disgraced and powerless Khilāfat, he says, "is a fact of considerable significance." The same writer further points out that what Alā-ud-dīn had failed to do was done by his son Mubārak. "He was the first ruler who had ventured to shake off the fiction of the Khilāfat and thereby proclaim the sovereign power of the Sultanat of Delhi independent

of the Khilāfat, and refused to recognise the legal superiority of any power outside his empire. He went even further when he declared himself the Great Imām the representative of God (al Imām ul 'Azam Khalifai Rabbul 'Alimīn or Khalifat ullāh or Amīr-ul-Mu-minīn)." If this does not indicate utter secularisation of the affairs of state, it certainly shows the trend towards the emancipation of the administration from clerical domination. Perhaps, as we shall presently see, it indicated more than anything else, that the Sultan's power and authority were firmly established in this country and autocracy at Delhi was trying to perfect itself. That even highly secularised autocracies are not free from religious persecution has been too well demonstrated by modern Dictators. The keynote of the new administration was "*Whatever I think to be for the good of the State, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree.*"

#### *Autocracy Crystallises :*

The great thing about Alā-ud-dīn was that he thought, planned systematically, and executed ruthlessly ; if the logic of facts convinced him to the contrary, he compromised and adapted himself to circumstances.

(1) The imperial spy-system was efficiently organised and worked as well, perhaps, as it did under the Mauryas. In a far-flung dominion with primitive means of communication the official news-reporter was an indispensable desideratum. If he proved perfunctory or otherwise derelict in his duties he was summarily executed and made an example of.

(2) The prohibition of liquor was a drastic but salutary measure, bound to react wholesomely on society and politics. The Sultan not merely dictated abstinence to others, as did Jahangir later, but himself set the example : 'jars and casks of wine were brought out of royal cellars, and emptied at the Badaun gate in such abundance that mud and mire were produced as in the rainy season.' Nevertheless, smuggling and boot-legging soon convinced Alā-ud-dīn of the necessity of relaxing the stringency of the law. He accordingly restricted prohibition to public use at convivial gatherings and vintage or distillation for traffic only. All social relations, including marriages between two noble families, were brought under strict surveillance and control.

(3) The lot of the Hindus, in particular, under Alā-ud-dīn's vigilant autocracy, became more irksome than it had ever been un-



der the previous Sultans. It had its parallel only in the condition of the Jats of Sind under their Chach and Arab rulers. The oft-cited dictum of the Kāzī of Bayāna undoubtedly represented the attitude of uncompromising orthodoxy towards the Hindus. There is reason to believe that Alā-ud-dīn respected the sacerdotal prescription in this regard no more than he did the *obiter dicta* of the Kāzī of Delhi about his own appropriation of the booty captured in war.

‘They are called *Khirāj-guzārs*’, the Kāzī is reported to have declared, ‘and when the revenue officer demands silver from them, they should without question and with all humility and respect, tender gold. If the *Muhassil* chooses to spit into the mouth of a Hindu, the latter must open his mouth without hesitation.’ Even the Kāzī did not seem to have meant this literally for he added, ‘The meaning of doing such a thing is that the Hindu by acting in this wise shows his meekness and humility, and obedience and respect. The glorification of Islam is a duty, and contempt of the religion is vain. God himself has commanded their subjection, inasmuch as the Hindus are the deadliest foes of the Prophet. The Prophet has said that they should either embrace Islam or they should be slain or enslaved, and their property should be confiscated to the State. No one except the great doctor Abu Hanifa allows the imposition of the *jizya* upon the Hindus, while other schools are of opinion that there is no other alternative for them but death or Islam.”

The choice that Alā-ud-dīn offered to the Hindus was to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, the helots of the empire. They had only enough left to them to eke out a bare subsistence; they could neither ride a horse, nor dress decently, nor bear arms, nor even chew betel. Their women had to seek service in Musalman households out of sheer penury. ‘At my command,’ Alā-ud-dīn boasted, ‘they are ready to creep into holes like mice.’

#### *General Expropriation :*

(4) The policy of expropriation in order to curb individual prosperity, beyond what was safe for the state to allow, was general rather than confined to the Hindus. No doubt, the Sultan is reported to have declared that ‘the Hindus will never become submissive and obedient till they are reduced to poverty’; but his entire revenue policy was based upon the principle that most of his subjects, whether Hindu or Muslim, ‘shall not be allowed to accumulate hoards of property.’ Balban had attempted a general resumption of fiefs in the Punjab, but failed despite his plan of generous compensation. Alā-ud-dīn, however, made confiscation of accumulated reserves al-

most universal, and yet succeeded. Perhaps he was encouraged by his experiment with the Jalāli nobles. Then again, the reduction of properties being not invidious, no one could make a special grievance of it.

'The Sultan,' says Baranī, 'ordered that wherever there was a village held by proprietary right (*milk*), in free gift (*in'am*), or as a religious endowment (*wakf*), it should by one stroke of the pen be brought under the exchequer. The people were pressed and amerced and money was exacted from them on every kind of pretext. Many were left without any money, till at length it came to pass that, excepting *Maliks* and *Amirs*, officials, Multanis (*i.e.*, large traders from *Multan*) and bankers, no one possessed even a trifle in cash. So rigorous was the confiscation that, beyond a few thousand *tankās*, all the pensions, grants in land, and endowments in the country were appropriated. The people were all so absorbed in obtaining the means of living that the very name of rebellion was never mentioned.'

#### *Control of Commodities and Prices :*

(5) As a corollary to the enforced poverty of the subjects, it was found necessary to regulate the prices of commodities, to ensure that 'just sufficient shall be left to them from year to year of corn, milk and curds.' This was at first adopted as a war measure under the stress of the Mongol invasions. A large army was found necessary for frontier defence, and it could not be maintained without excessive costs. Alā-ud-dīn, shrewd practical man of business that he was, thought of a measure wherewith armaments could be increased to the required extent without, at the same time, unduly burdening the exchequer. The cost of subsistence was not to be allowed to fluctuate according to the law of demand and supply, but permanently and rigidly fixed. The salary of a soldier was to be 234 *tankās*, with an additional allowance of 78 *tankās* for those who kept two horses. Within this amount he was to support his family and furnish himself with horse and arms throughout the year. Hence, the Sultan enacted that the price of necessities shall be in accordance with the tariff determined by the government. Wheat was to sell at no more than 7½ *jitals* per *maund* ; barley at 4 *jitals* ; paddy (unhusked rice) at 5 *jitals* ; etc. The price of sugar was fixed at 1⅓ *jitals* per *seer*, and unrefined *gūr* at ⅓ *jital* per *seer* ; salt was 2 *jitals* per *maund*. Nothing was missed in the tariff : vegetables, fruits, oil, as well as, caps, shoes, combs and needles ; even the slaves and marketable girls were priced. A maid-servant cost 5 to 12 *tankās*, a concubine 20 to

40 *tankās* ; a slave-labourer 10 to 15 *tankās*, and a handsome page 20 to 30 *tankās*. It is interesting to note that horses of all grades sold better : first class 100 to 120 *tanikās* ; second class 80 to 90 *tankās* ; third class 65 to 70 *tankās*. Even ponies fetched 10 to 25 *tankās* a head. Cows and goats were relatively cheaper : a cow being 3 to 4 *tankās*, and a she-goat 10 to 14 *jitals*.

To meet emergencies, grain was stocked in state granaries, to furnish which the revenue in the *khālṣa* villages of the Doab was collected in kind. Hence, even in times of drought, no scarcity of food was felt. No producer within 100 *kos* of the Doab was allowed to store corn even to the extent of 10 *maunds*, all surplus being compulsorily sold to licensed dealers at tariff rates. During periods of scarcity in the country, grain was supplied from the central market, no more than half a *maund* being sold to a single purchaser.

The essence of this system of political economy, as Moreland summarises, consisted in (1) control of supplies, and (2) control of transport, with (3) rationing of consumption when necessary, the whole system resting on (4) a highly organised intelligence, and (5) drastic punishment of evasions. "This summary, it will be seen," he writes, "applies almost precisely to the system of control which was elaborated in England during the years of war, and which was proved by experience to be effective." Baranī accounts for the success of Alā-ud-dīn's market regulation by (1) the strict enforcement of the law, (2) the vigorous collection of revenue, (3) the scarcity of metallic currency, and (4) the zeal of the officers who acted in fear of the Sultan. A glimpse of the official machinery will convince the reader of the truthfulness of these observations.

#### *The Steel-frame at Work :*

The whole system was under a comptroller of Markets, known as the *Shahna-i-mandi*, assisted by an efficient staff of subordinate officers. He kept a *daftar* or register of licensed dealers, and no trader who was not so registered was allowed to transact any business. A well organised body of informers kept the Sultan in touch with the working of the markets from day to day. On one or two occasions the Superintendent of Markets was himself punished with 21 stripes for presuming to suggest a little enhancement in the price of corn. If people got crushed in the crowd for want of traffic control, the negligence was as well visited upon the Superintendent.

The punishments for all violations of the tariff were Draconic. For instance, a vendor who gave a diminished weight of a commodity for the scheduled price had to make good the difference, when detected, Shylock-wise, with an equal quantity of flesh from his own body.

The land revenue was increased by Alā-ud-dīn to 50 per cent. of the produce ; and the revenue officers who were found guilty of accepting bribes were punished 'with sticks, pincers, the rack, imprisonment and chains.' This made the officials so vigilant and strict in their duties that they came to be regarded as more deadly than the plague ; "and to be a government clerk was a disgrace worse than death, insomuch that no Hindu would marry his daughter to such a man."

### *Tyranny ends in Turmoil :*

The twenty years' tyranny of Alā-ud-dīn at last came to an end with his death on 2 January 1316. His constitution had been undermined both by his incontinence and the high pressure at which all tyrants are called upon to work. "His ill-health made him more suspicious and irritable than ever ; and, like most people who distrust the bulk of mankind, he was the dupe of one artful individual." Malik Kāfur, Alā-ud-dīn's evil genius, so wrought upon him during his illness that the irascible autocrat was induced to imprison both his heir-apparent Khizr Khān and his mother on a charge of conspiracy. The infant Shihāb-ud-dīn Umar was nominated successor, instead, that the Naib, acting as regent, might have all the power in his own hands. Meanwhile rebellions broke out on all sides : Harapāla, Shankerdeo's successor at Deogiri, was among the first to declare himself independent and drive out the Muslim garrisons in his territory ; Rāṇa Hamīr of Chitor likewise ousted the Mlechhas from the sacred soil of Rājasthān ; and Gujarat followed suit.

"The paroxysms of rage produced by a succession of these tidings increased the king's sufferings, and soon brought him to the brink of the grave. His end is said to have been accelerated by poison, administered by Cāfur." (Elphinstone)

Though Alā-ud-dīn 'could not read or write a letter,' as Baranī tells us, and 'was bad-tempered, obstinate and hard-hearted,' 'fortune befriended him, and his schemes were generally successful.' "Though he might be wrong-headed and disdainful of the law,"

Lane-Poole remarks, Alā-ud-dīn, "was a man of sense and determination, who knew his own mind, saw the necessities of the situation, met them by his own methods, and carried out those methods, with presistence." The result was, in the words of Ferishta, so long as Alā-ud-dīn was active, he 'executed justice with such rigour, that robbery and theft, formerly so common, were not heard of in the land. The traveller slept secure on the highway, and the merchant carried his commodities in safety from the sea of Bengal to the mountains of Kabul and from Telingana to Kashmir.' But, 'fortune, as usual, proved fickle; and destiny 'drew her poniard to destroy him.'" No sooner was Alā-ud-dīn laid in the dust than the kingdom was plunged in chaos.

### *Three Rulers in Four Years :*

Malik Kāfur, "the extent of whose abilities" according to Elphinstone, "was equalled by the depravity of his principles," arrogated all authority to himself, and set about the ruthless business of extirpating all rivals. The eyes of Prince Khizr Khān and his brother Shādi Khān, who were both in prison, were 'cut out from the sockets, with a razor, like slices of melon.' All others who were likely to prove obstacles to the Regent were put out of action one by one. But, when the turn of another son of the late Sultan, Mubārak, came, the usurper was forestalled and put to death. Thus died ignominiously the first Muslim conqueror of South India, within a few weeks of his master's death.

The short reign of Mubārak (1316-20 A.D.) who then ascended the throne at Delhi was typical. He began like his father distributing largesse in order to win popularity. Then he abrogated all the stringent regulations of Alā-ud-dīn, and set about restoring order in the kingdom. Ain-ul-Multānī was sent to Gujarat to put down the rebellion in that province, after which the Sultan's father-in-law, Zafar Khān, was appointed its governor. In 1317 A.D. Mubārak himself set out for the Deccan, and defeating Harapāla flayed him alive. Then appointing Malik Ekalakī governor at Deogiri, he returned to Delhi. His favourite Khusru Khān, another low born Hindu convert like the *hazār-dināri* was at the same time despatched to South India. Khusru, on a small scale, repeated the exploits of his predecessor at Madura and Wārangal, but instead of loyally

returning to the capital, meditated making himself independent master in the peninsula.

Meanwhile, Mubārak, on his return to Delhi found sufficient work to engage him in 'cutting off the tallest poppies.' During his short absence, a plot had been hatched to assassinate him, and as a matter of fact, a ten-year old son of Khizr Khān had been proclaimed Sultan, with the title of Shams-ud-dīn Mahmūd Shāh (1318-19 A.D.). Coins of this parvenu are still extant. Mubārak had all the conspirators seized and executed. Even the three luckless and blinded brothers, Khizr Khān, Shādi Khān, and Umar Khān, who were rotting in their prison cells at Gwalior, were not spared. And for an unknown reason, Zafar Khān, Mubārak's own father-in-law, too, was summoned from Gujarat and put to death likewise. Having accomplished this stern detergence, Mubārak addressed himself to wine and women. "The sudden removal of all the harsh restraints which the people had suffered (under the old reign)," as Sir Wolseley Haig has observed, "produced an outburst of licentiousness similar to that which had disgraced the short reign of Kaiqubād, and once again the king's example encouraged the extravagance of his subjects, for his morals were no better than his father's and from the earliest days of his reign he was entirely under the influence of a vile favourite." That favourite, as we saw, was 'hatching the egg of ambition in his brain' in South India. Nevertheless, the enamoured Sultan recalled him to Court for his pleasures, despite the reports of Khusru Khān's designs having previously reached him. The wretched Mubārak after his elder brother's execution had also appropriated his beautiful Hindu wife Deval Devi to his own *harem*. The licentious orgies that followed have been, perhaps, paralleled only by those of Louis XV in France and the Mughal Emperor Jahāndar Shāh in this country. We need not befoul our pages with their description.

Caught in the midst of these snares the son of the great autocrat Alā-ud-dīn, who had presumed to call himself *al-Wāsiḡ-billāh*, the Vicegerent of the God of heaven and earth, was foully murdered by his own favourite Khusru Khān, who then ascended the throne, proclaiming himself Nāsir-ud-dīn Khusru Shāh.

### *The Dance of Death :*

The new emperor of Delhi was an outcaste *Dher* from western

India. He had been nominally converted and called Hasan thereafter. His infatuated master, Mubārak, made him his chief minister under the title by which he is more familiarly known. His exploits in South India have already been recounted. His real office had been that of a prostitute. The first result of his usurpation was the appropriation of the twice dishonoured and ruthless Deval Devi. During the confusion that was created by Mubārak's murder, the execrable followers of Khusru had already invaded the sanctity of the royal *harem*, murdered the children of the ruling family, and outraged the women.

It is not a little surprising that a number of the old officials received titles at the hands of such a wretch. Perhaps the Khalji theory of kingship was responsible for their ready acquiescence or they were merely biding their time. Thus Wahid-ud-din Quraishi was entitled Tāj-ul-Mulk and retained as minister. Ain-ul-Mulk Multānī received the titles of 'Ālam Khān and Amīr-ul-Umrā. Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Juna, son of the powerful Ghāzi Malik the hero of the frontier who scared away the Mongols under Alā-ud-din Khalji, and the future Muhammad Tughlak, was appointed Master of the Horse. But the latter effected his escape to his father at Dipalpur rather than countenance what was going on at Delhi. Here the new Sultan throwing off his light veneer of Islam at once inaugurated a reign of persecution of the followers of the 'true faith.' "Mosques were defiled and destroyed and copies of the scriptures of Islam were used as seats and stools." under these circumstances Ain-ul-Mulk and the other Muslim nobles who appeared to have reconciled themselves to the new regime, turned against Khusru and his vile supporters. Ghāzi Malik and his son Juna, having gathered a large army in the Punjab, presently marched towards the capital. Khusru made a desperate effort to win support from all and sundry by scattering the royal treasures among them, and, after a brief but fierce struggle, finally tried to save himself by flight. Yet, Nemesis discovered him lurking in a garden and 'dispatched him to hell.' Brought before Ghāzi Malik he was promptly beheaded. The victor found himself in Jalāl-ud-din Khalji's strange predicament. Entering the Palace of the Thousand Pillars, he "wept as he beheld the scene of destruction of his old master's family." Casting about in vain for a legitimate survivor to be placed on the throne

of Alā-ud-dīn, he was himself proclaimed King by the army and nobility as Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak Shāh, on 8 September, 1320.

## SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
1321-51	Muhammad Tughlak rules at Delhi ; Empire extends over nearly all India.
1326-7	Foundation of Daulatābad.
1329-32	Currency experiment of M. Tughlak.
1334-42	Ibn Battuta in India.
1336	City of Vijayanagara founded.
1337-8	Accession of Shāh Mir, first Muslim ruler of Kashmir.
1338	Independence of Bengal.
1342	Prolonged famine in India.
1343	Death of Harihara I of Vijayanagara.
1347	Foundation of the Bahmani Kingdom in the Deccan ; Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh up to 1358.
1348	Black Death in England decimates nearly half the population.
1351-88	Reign of Firūz Shāh Tughlak.
1387-95	Famine in the Deccan.
1394-97	Two rival Sultans reigning at Delhi simultaneously.
1396	Independence of Gujarat.
1398-99	Timūr's invasion of India.
1399-1414	Anarchy.



## CHAPTER VI

### SECOND EMPIRE OF THE CRESCENT : TUGHLAK

#### *Alā-ud-dīn's Imperial Legacy :*

Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī was the first Muslim Emperor of India. During his reign, for the first time, the Crescent dominated over the whole country from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from sea to sea. He was also the first Muslim ruler of India to make a bold experiment in administration. Balban had done little beyond consolidating his kingdom and maintaining order therein. What little of government there was, under the greatest of the Slave Sultans, was of a primitive character. Suppression of rebellion, eradication of robbery, and defence of the realm against foreign invaders were the primary tasks which absorbed all the energies of Balban. Alā-ud-dīn no doubt reaped all the benefits of this most essential spade-work. But he was also an innovator. However crude his autocracy, and whatever fate his dynasty might have immediately suffered, his administrative system supplied the foundation on which all later Muslim rulers in India built. According to Dr. Tripathi, from whom we have quoted more than once, "The Khiljis had made two contributions to kingship. They showed that kingship was not a monopoly of any privileged class, but that it was within the reach of those who had the power and ability to hold it.... The second contribution made by the Khiljis was that kingship could exist without any special religious support and that the outlook of a king was very different from that of the clergy. This was the greatest contribution of 'Alā-ud-dīn.'"

#### *Model Muslim Monarch :*

Ghāzi Malik, the Warden of the Marches, who had stoutly defended the kingdom against the recurring Mongol incursions during the reign of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, and delivered the throne from the filthy Khusru, proved himself within the few years that were left to him (1320-25 A.D.) a model Muslim monarch in every sense of the

term. He belonged to a Turkish stock of adventurers who had settled in the Punjab and married among the natives, possibly Jats, and were known as Karauna Tughlaks. "Born of an Indian mother," Dr. Ishwari Prasad has observed, "Ghazi Malik typified in his character the salient features of the two races : the modesty and mildness of the Hindu and the virility and vigour of the Turk." No better evidence of his energy, aged though he was, could be cited than the swiftness with which he overthrew the usurper and pacified the capital ; "within forty days his sovereignty was everywhere acknowledged." The tears that he shed at the Red Palace were not the senile drops of Jalāl-ud-dīn but the genuine mark of his feeling for the extirpation, at the hands of infidels, of his late master's family. His loyalty was deeper than tears, for he laid the coping-stone on the work begun by Alā-ud-dīn. "The trusty warden of the marches," as Lane-Poole has said, "proved a just, high-minded and vigorous king."

The first task of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, or Tughlak Shāh I as he is more familiarly called, was to win the full confidence of all the nobles and officers, and then to restore order in the Empire. The way in which he accomplished this showed both his statesmanship and his alacrity. The low-born supporters of Khusru were of course ruthlessly exterminated, but the other nobles and officers who had in any way acquiesced in the usurpation were more leniently treated. Even those who had received the usurper's gold were given the chance of reimbursing the treasury in easy instalments after retaining a year's salary for themselves.

During the anarchical interlude between the last days of Alā-ud-dīn and the accession of Tughlak Shāh (1316-20 A.D.) the Empire had been shaken to its foundations. Mubārak had, indeed, acted with celerity in the first two years of his reign and reduced Gujarat, the Deccan and Telingana once again to submission. But during the next two years of licentiousness and rioting which followed, more was lost, perhaps, than had been secured by Mubārak and Khusru. (1) In the Punjab, owing to the eagle-eyes and talons of Ghāzi Malik, imperial authority continued to be exercised against all the turbulent elements that composed that province. (2) In Gujarat, after the recall and murder of Zafar Khān by his erratic son-in-law Mubārak (1318 A.D.), though Anhilwārā continued to be the headquarters of an imperial governor, owing to the determined resistance of the Hindu

chiefs, the Muslims "possessed little more than the encamping ground of their armies." (3) In Rajputāna and Mālwa, the Rajputs threw the Musalmans over the walls of the fortress of Chitor and reasserted their independence. (4) In the Deccan, Rāja Harapāla had been overthrown and a Muslim governor appointed in his place ; hence nominal allegiance to Delhi continued. (5) In Telingana and the south, although Khusru had repeated the exploits of Malik Kāfur, Pratāparudradeva II recovered his independence in the wake of the conqueror's return to Delhi. (6) Bengal was still under the descendants of Balban, and Alā-ud-dīn had not formally annexed their kingdom.

*Reduction of Wārangal :* The new Sultan began with the most urgent among the insurgent provinces, viz., Telingana. For Pratāparudra was growing too powerful and had repeatedly shown his insubordination. Besides, the final subjugation of that distant Hindu kingdom would have a salutary effect upon all others, and also serve to satisfy the conscience of the Ghāzi. The responsible task was entrusted to the crown-prince, Juna or Ulugh Khān, the future Muhammad Tughlak. But the siege of Wārangal demonstrated that its reduction was not an easy job. To add to the inherent difficulties of the endeavour rumour bruited that Tughlak Shāh had died at Delhi leaving the throne vacant. Nevertheless, the army did not appear to be ready to accept Ulugh Khān as Ghiyās-ud-dīn's successor. Confusion followed, and Ulugh had to beat a hurried retreat to Delhi, to pacify his still surviving father against the possible misunderstanding caused by his presumptive bid for the throne. Father and son were evidently soon reconciled to each other, for Ulugh Khān returned next year to Wārangal and completed his arduous task of subduing Telingana (1322 A.D.). Pratāparudra surrendered with family after a heroic resistance ; all arrears of tribute were collected ; the whole country was divided into smaller provinces to facilitate government ; and Wārangal was renamed Sultanpur. The policy was inaugurated of appointing Muslim governors in place of refractory Hindu feudatories. The victorious Prince returned to Delhi, subduing Bidar and Jājnagar *en route*, and great rejoicings were held at the capital to celebrate this triumph to the arms of Islam.

*The Bengal Campaign :* A succession dispute among the grandsons of Bughra Khān in Bengal invited imperial intervention from Delhi in 1324 A.D. This time Ghiyās-ud-dīn marched to Lakhnauti

in person, leaving the capital in the charge of the Crown Prince. Events showed that this was a fateful arrangement. Ghiyās-ud-dīn indeed was eminently successful in his campaign. Nāsir-ud-dīn, the more submissive brother, was reinstated in place of Bahādur, and a baton and canopy were bestowed upon him as a mark of imperial favour. On his way back, the Rāja of Tirhut who opposed him was put down and Tirhut placed under a Muslim governor. But treachery lay in wait for the victorious old Sultan in his own capital. The Crown Prince had arranged a grand reception for his father in a pavilion specially erected for the purpose at some distance from the city. In the midst of the festivities, when Ghiyās-ud-dīn was a little separated from the rest, together with a favourite younger son of his, the whole structure collapsed over their heads, and father and son met an unexpected death. When the *debris* was cleared, the old man's body was found bending over that of his son, as though he had tried to protect him from the calamity. The entire tragedy, on the statement of Ibn Battuta and other circumstantial evidence, has been ascribed to the designs of the Crown Prince whose earlier attempt to assume sovereignty in Telingana had been foiled. This occurred about February 1325, and Ulugh Khān ascended the throne, three days after, in the fort of Tughlakābad erected by his father. Thus began and ended the brief reign of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak who, like Jalāl-ud-dīn Firūz Khaljī, founded a new dynasty at an advanced age only to make room for a more famous, ambitious and impatient successor. But there ends the parallel between the first Khaljī and the first Tughlak; in all other respects the two were a contrast to each other.

Jalāl-ud-dīn's reign was weak, senile and fatuous; Ghiyās-ud-dīn's was strong, virile and fruitful. In essential respects the former resembles the Mughal Bahādur Shāh I; the latter reminds us of Sher Shāh Sūr. Especially in administrative policy Tughlak Shāh I must be considered the prototype of the later Sher Shāh. But, of course, no exact congruence is to be sought for. Historical parallels are suggestive rather than photographic.

*Ghiyās-ud-dīn's Government* : In the words of Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "No structural changes were made in the constitution of government; no new organisations were undertaken as they were under his illustrious son Muhammad Tughlaq." But "his administration was based upon the principles of justice and moderation, and

in the enforcement of his regulations he was guided by his desire to advance the public weal." (*History of Qaraunah Turks*, vol. I, p. 49).

Finance was the test of the situation. Both Mubārak and Khusru had squandered like prodigals. Ghiyās-ud-dīn was consequently faced with a depleted treasury. He instituted a searching enquiry and adopted stringent measures for the recovery of all ill-gotten wealth. In venial cases, however, as pointed out before, he permitted reimbursement in easy instalments. "To prevent corruption and embezzlement he paid his officers well and promoted to high rank only those who gave proof of their loyalty and devotion. In the distribution of rewards he was guided by "considerations of rank, merit and length of service and avoided all invidious distinctions. He was not a whimsical despot but a sagacious and thoughtful ruler who always consulted his councillors in important matters of state."

Ghiyās-ud-dīn's revenue policy illustrates his statesmanship more than anything else he did. He wisely disallowed the system of farming which had long been in vogue under the feudal conditions of early Muslim rule. The rapacious farmers of revenue were not even permitted to approach the *Diwan-i-Wizārat*. Though the assessment of Alā-ud-dīn remained unaltered, the excesses of the revenue-collectors were brought under control. The *amirs* and *maliks* were not allowed to take as their fee more than 1|20 to 1|15 of the revenues of their provinces, and the *kār kūns* and *mutsarrifs* were permitted a perquisite not exceeding 5 to 10 per thousand. Even where a slight enhancement of revenue was justified, Baranī tells us, 'The *khirāj* was to increase gradually over a number of years and not all at once, for by doing so the country suffers and the path of progress is blocked.' We do not come across such tender consideration for the country until the days of Sher Shāh Sūr two centuries later. "The *Jagirdars* and *Hākims* were asked to be careful in the realisation of the *khirāj* so that the *khūts* and *muqaddams* may not impose any additional burden upon the people besides the state dues... Large remissions of revenue were made in times of drought and the defaulters were treated with great generosity... No man was to be held in bondage for the sake of money and every facility was provided by the state to enable the people to meet their obligations without any discomfort or vexation."

The same minute attention was bestowed by the Sultan on all

departments of the state. A system of poor-relief was organised, and the judicial and police arrangements were so efficiently managed that, in the trite phraseology of the Muslim chroniclers, 'the wolf dared not seize upon the lamb and the lion and the deer drank at one stream.' An old veteran himself, Ghiyās-ud-dīn was affable towards the meanest soldier in the army and eminently succeeded in improving its *morale* and efficiency. The system of Alā-ud-dīn according to which horses were branded and identified in a detailed muster-roll was continued, to avoid chicanery such as Balban had encountered among the Punjab fief-holders; and "a most efficient postal service" was restored.

Despite his easy success and sudden elevation to imperial authority, Ghāzi Malik retained his old simplicity and self-discipline in life. Though stern like Balban and Alā-ud-dīn, there was in all he did a genuine touch of humanity. A man of action schooled in war though he was, he could still patronise great poets like Amir Khusrau. Warned of the fate of Alā-ud-dīn and Mubārak he never indulged in any sensual pleasures and shrank instinctively from 'handsome beardless boys'—the vice of his age. Masterful and puritanical, Ghiyās-ud-dīn avoided the tyranny as well as the pomp and pageantry of Balban and Aurangzeb in public life and state functions. "During his brief reign he did much to wipe out the disgrace which had befallen the empire of Delhi, to reorganise the administration which had fallen out of gear, and to re-establish the power (and prestige) of the monarchy, which had been reduced to a nullity during the Khusruite regime." He fully merited the description of him by his own poet-laureate Amir Khusrau, who wrote :

Wisdom and prudence in all that he did were revealed ;  
The faculties' hoods seemed under his crown concealed.

### *The Enigmatic Sultan Muhammad :*

The character of the parricide Prince Juna Khān, who ascended the throne of Delhi in February or March 1325, as Muhammad Tughlak, and ruled during the next twenty-six years (till 1351 A.D.), has exercised the minds of scholars ever since. His detractors have depicted him as the very devil incarnate; while his too sympathetic critics have discovered in him "unquestionably the ablest man among the crowned heads of the middle ages." There could be but little doubt that Muhammad Tughlak was a great enigma to his own age

and has remained the same to this day. Baranī and Ibn Battuta were both his contemporaries and have left on record very vivid impressions of what they saw and felt. Whilst they appreciated and even admired the numerous natural talents and accomplishments of the undoubtedly gifted monarch, they unsparingly chronicled even what could not well be assimilated with the better side of his character. Whatever their personal bias, therefore (there are few persons without it), we should be thankful to them for leaving behind them testimony which V. A. Smith rightly considered "is extraordinarily detailed and accurate." Making due allowance for personal colour it is not difficult to find in their pages a true picture of both the man and his times. To do this it is not necessary either to vilify Muhammad Tughlak as a monster of iniquity or to embark on a learned apologia for what was *prima facie* indefensible in him. A detached examination of the uncontroverted facts of the reign must precede any judgment that might be proffered on their basis.

*A Favourable Start* : The first thing to be noted is the very favourable start that Muhammad had in his career as king. Despite his reprehensible antecedents in securing the throne for himself the immediate situation at the time of his accession was anything but hostile. "He followed a deeply revered father, and he had a high reputation of his own. He was known to be a great general, and his private life was temperate and even austere. All India was quiet, and the distant provinces had been recovered." Nothing more helpful could have been desired even by a talented prince like Muhammad Tughlak. "He was," besides, "perfect in the humanities of his day, a keen student of Persian poetry—the Latin of Indian education,—a master of style, supremely eloquent in an age of rhetoric, a philosopher, trained in logic and Greek metaphysics, with whom scholars feared to argue, a mathematician and a lover of science. The contemporary writers extol his skill in composition and his exquisite calligraphy, and his beautiful coinage bears witness to his critical taste in the art of engrossing the Arabic character, which he read and understood though he could not speak the language fluently." Such was the personality that Prince Muhammad brought to bear on his daring plans whose stupendous failure was to earn for him the dubious sobriquet of 'the wisest fool in Crescentdom.'

*Oppression in the Doab* : In the fashion of all usurpers of the age Muhammad's coronation was attended with lavish gifts of gold

that naturally depleted the treasury which had been replenished by the practical wisdom of his father. This necessitated enhancement of the revenue which was also needed to meet the grandiose schemes of conquest which Muhammad had in mind. The experiment was made in the rich province of the Doab. Certain cesses were also added to the land-revenue which was itself increased. The consequence was that, in the words of Baranī, 'the backs of the rayats were broken. Those who were rich became rebels; the lands were ruined and cultivation was arrested. Grain became dear, the rains were deficient, so famine became general. It lasted for years, and thousands upon thousands of people perished.' Making all deductions for the element of exaggeration which might have crept into Baranī's description owing to his own native-land of Baran having suffered, Dr. Ishwari Prasad nevertheless admits that "Unfortunately, this measure was carried out at a time when a severe famine was prevailing in the Doab, and the distress of the people was greatly aggravated by its disastrous effects. But this does not exonerate the Sultan altogether from blame; for his officials continued to levy taxes at the enhanced rate with the utmost rigour, and made no allowance for famine... The remedy came too late."

*Delhi to Deogiri* : Then came the famous transference of his capital from Delhi to Deogiri renamed Daulatābad (1326-27 A.D.). There was nothing preposterous in the idea itself. Capitals have been shifted even in modern times of greater facilities for communication. The Empire had grown too vast to be easily controlled from Delhi. Daulatābad, as Baranī observes, 'had a central situation, nearly equidistant (700 miles) from Delhi, Gujarat, Lakhnauti, Tilang, and other chief places.' But the execution of the idea in the manner it was done made Muhammad ridiculous.

'Without consultation or weighing the *pros* and *cons*,' says Baranī, 'he brought ruin on Delhi which for 170 or 180 years had grown in prosperity and rivalled Baghdad and Cairo. The city with its *sarais* and suburbs and villages spread over four or five leagues: all was destroyed (i.e. deserted). Not a cat or a dog was left. Troops of the inhabitants with their families were forced to remove, broken-hearted; many perished on the road, and those who reached Deogiri, unable to endure their exile, pined to death. All round Deogiri, an infidel land, spread graveyards of Muslims. The Sultan was bounteous to the emigrants, both on the journey and arrival; but they were tender and could not suffer exile. They laid down their heads in that heathen land, and of the multitudes few lived to return to their native home.'

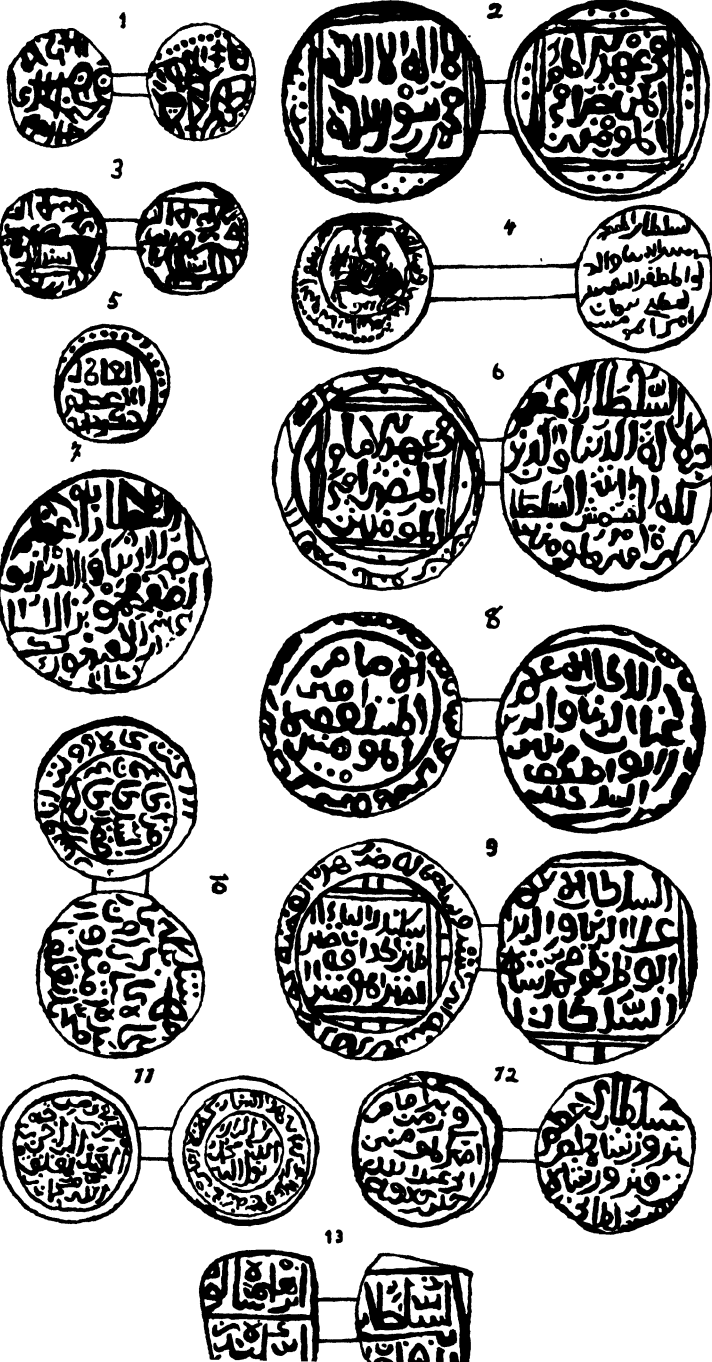


The result is better imagined than described. Muhammad realised his great blunder, permitted the survivors to return to Delhi and left Daulatābad "a monument of misdirected energy" as Lane-Poole has called it. Coins bearing the proud inscription 'the Metropolis of Islam' commemorated the colossal experiment. When Ibn Battuta visited the capital in 1333 A.D. Delhi was being strenuously rehabilitated, but it was a long time before the imperial city recovered from the effects of its historic evacuation.

*Mongol Invasion :* One of the first fruits of the desertion of Delhi was an invasion of the Punjab by the Mongol Tarmāshirin (1328-29 A.D.). Ghiyās-ud-dīn had so fortified the western frontiers that the Mongols dared not venture into India so long as he was alive. But recent happenings in this country were too tempting for the opportunity to be missed by the ever watchful marauders. The news of Muhammad's *coup d'état* which established him on the throne must certainly have reached them, as also of the discontent and sufferings caused by famine and oppression in the Doab and the transference of the capital to the distant Deccan. The moment was therefore ripe for another adventure. "Having subjugated Lamghan, Multan and the northern provinces, the Mughals (we might call them so hereafter) harried the entire plain extending from Multan and Lahore to the outskirts of Delhi. The districts of Samana, Indari and Badāon also suffered at their hands." Muhammad had been warned of this danger when he determined upon the transference of the capital, but he was impervious to argument. Now when the storm actually burst he had no remedy but to buy off the marauders as Æthelred 'the unready' had done with the Danes in England.

*The Currency Experiment :* All the events hitherto narrated had but one effect : the prodigality of the coronation, the fruitlessness of the Doab exactions, the famine, the expenditure incurred in the transference and retransference of the capital, the cost of rehabilitating Delhi, and finally, the price of keeping off the Mughals,—all contributed to make the Exchequer anæmic. The dilettante Sultan was resourceful in ideas and he brought forth a new scheme of juggling with the currency,—not prices and commodities like Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī. Great praise has been bestowed upon Muhammad for his improvement of the crude coinage of his predecessors ; he has been styled a 'Prince of Moneyers.' Without challenging this appreciation which was well merited so far as other aspects of Muham-





mad's numismatic reform were concerned, we have here to deal with only one innovation, viz. the introduction of a token currency. This experiment should be judged on its own merits without clouding the issue with other complimentary achievements in the same field. He had earlier introduced a gold *dinar* weighing 201·6 grains, and revived the silver *adali* of 144 grains. To facilitate smaller dealings he had devised the *dokani* or *sultani*, etc. The illustrations given elsewhere in this book will show how artistic the design, execution and finish of Muhammad's coinage was compared with that of the earlier Sultans of Delhi.

It is, indeed, "in his rôle as a Prince of Moneyers," Thomas writes, "that Muhammad bin Tughlak claims our peculiar attention. His mintages are instructive both in the novelty and variety of their types, admirable in the artistic perfection of their design and execution, and especially significant in their reflex of the individuality of the Monarch himself, marking as they do, the various phases of his career—his early wealth and reckless profusion, its resulting poverty, which he attempted to meet by a forced currency, and equally his ready return to money payments on its ascertained failure. Next in order, they exemplify the doubts and difficulties concerning his own title to the throne, unconfirmed as it was by Pontifical authority, which he remedied by the curious process of the omission of his own name and the substitution of that of an Egyptian scion of the house of Abbās, who, as chance would have it, was already in his grave. So important, indeed, did he consider all matters connected with the public currency that one of the earliest acts of his reign was to remodel the coinage, to readjust its divisions to the altered relative values of the precious metals and to originate new and more exact representatives of the subordinate circulation."

Mr. C. J. Brown, agreeing with Thomas, confirms : Muhammad Tughlak, "has not unjustly been called by Thomas 'The Prince of Moneyers.' Not only do his coins surpass those of his predecessors in execution and especially in calligraphy, but his large output of gold, the number of his issues of all denominations, the interest of the inscriptions, reflecting his character and activities, his experiments with the coinage, particularly his forced currency, entitle him to a place among the greatest moneyers of history." (*The Coins of India*, p. 73.)

Granting all these excellences, what was the significance of his token coins ?

'A third project,' writes Barani, 'also did great havoc : this was the issue of copper money to be used as [standard] currency, like gold and silver. This edict turned the house of every Hindu (?) into a mint, and the

Indians of the provinces coined lacs and crores of copper coins, with which they paid their tribute and bought horses and arms and fine things of all sorts. The rais, the village headmen, and landowners grew rich on these copper coins but the state was impoverished. In no long time distant countries would only accept the copper *tanka* as metal, and in places where reverence for the edict prevailed the gold *tanka* rose to be worth a hundred copper *tankas*. Every goldsmith struck copper coins in his workshop, and the treasury was crammed with them. They fell so low, that they were no more valuable than pebbles or potsherds. Trade being disrupted, the Sultan repealed his edict, and in great wrath proclaimed that all the copper coins would be redeemed in gold or silver at the treasury. Thousands brought them for exchange and their heaps rose up in Taghlakābad like mountains.'

Dr. Ishwari Prasad has been at considerable pains to exonerate the Sultan from charges of eccentricity, greed and insolvency. The integrity of the well-meaning Sultan may not be impugned; the solvency of the imperial treasury was undoubtedly demonstrated by the return without break-down to the old currency, despite the heavy drain the entire operation must have involved. But Baranī's statement that the experiment was due to two causes, viz. (1) the need of money to maintain the great army of conquest (370,000 troops), and (2) the deficiency in the treasury caused by the Sultan's lavish gifts, etc., cannot be challenged. The relative scarcity of silver might also be accepted as a contributory incentive to the substitution of copper and brass tokens, though it is difficult to understand the "serious problem, created by the *scarcity of silver and its depreciation, consequent upon the influx of gold* from the Deccan into Hindustan."

Under these circumstances, "To reinforce the desire to multiply the currency," Dr. Ishwari Prasad tells us, "there was probably the love of experiment, for the Sultan who was a man of an original cast of mind, well-versed in the arts and sciences of the age, may have felt a powerful impulse to embark upon this *experiment in a scientific spirit*. The royal exhortations which accompanied the introduction of the currency and *the subsequent behaviour of the Sultan effectively rebut the charge of eccentricity*, which has been brought against him by modern writers." The Sultan certainly was not lacking in either the strength of will or authority to enforce the decree once he determined upon it. He must have foreseen the possibility of public opposition, but, like a stern medieval despot, he felt himself strong enough to carry the measure through even in the teeth of

popular prejudice or resistance offered by the moneyed classes." Muhammad also had the positive and negative results of like experiments made by Kublai Khān in China and Gai Khātu in Persia, to encourage and warn him. Yet did he feel obliged to retrace his steps as hastily as he had taken them (1330-32 A.D.). Thomas has hit the nail on the head in observing, "There was no special machinery to mark the difference of the fabric of the royal mint and the handiwork of a moderately skilled artisan. Unlike the precautions taken to prevent the imitation of the Chinese paper notes, there was positively no check upon the authenticity of the copper token, and no limit to the power of production by the masses at large." In the face of such unscientific bungling by the Sultan, "who was a man of an original cast of mind, well-versed in the arts and sciences of the age," it is not a little surprising to find Dr. Ishwari Prasad blame the people of the fourteenth century in India for Muhammad's ignoring the necessary precautions that observation and common sense must have alike enjoined. "To the people at large in those days," he says, "brass was brass and copper was copper, however urgent the needs of the state." But we have already noted how according to Baranī the people despite their "conservative character" bought and sold 'horses and arms and fine things of all sorts' as well as paid the tribute with those very tokens of brass and copper. In the light of these facts we might concur with Dr. Ishwari Prasad's own dictum: "In judging human affairs and analysing human motives the recondite is apt to be the fallacious as well as the obscure, and the simplest explanation is often the most correct and natural." He is perfectly right where he states, "The new currency exceeded the supply of gold and silver in circulation. Naturally, *when the inferior money was put upon the market in large quantities, the superior money was driven out of it through the operation of Gresham's law.*"

*Anarchy Ajoot* : We must now turn to the political history of the reign. It is a sad tale of disruption. The first ten years of Muhammad's rule passed off without any serious portents of the coming dismemberment; but between 1335 and 1351 A.D. the provinces fell off one after another: Telingana and Mysore, Bengal and the Deccan were lost in quick succession. Of the vast empire which included twenty-three provinces at the commencement, stretching from Sind and the Punjab in the west, to Bihar and Bengal in the east, and from the Himalayas in the north, to Mysore and

Madura in the south, only Hindustan proper and Gujarat nominally remained when Muhammad died. The story of this rapid dissolution may be briefly told.

*Ma'bar* : The earliest rebellion of consequence took place in 1335 A.D. in Ma'bar. Jalāl-ud-dīn Ahsan Shāh, who had been placed in charge of Ma'bar, taking advantage of the increasing embarrassments in the north raised the standard of revolt. Though famine and lawlessness prevailed in the vicinity of the capital, Muhammad was obliged to take the field in person. He marched to the south with a large army, but misfortune dogged his footsteps. Cholera decimated his men and the expedition ended in failure.

*Bengal* : Bengal followed in the wake of Telingana (1336-37 A.D.). Fakhrud-dīn, an armour-bearer of the governor of east Bengal, slew his master and usurped his authority. Kadr Khān, the governor of Lakhnauti, marching against him met with a similar fate, and the rebellious Fakhr-ud-din proclaimed himself independent. The helpless and much distracted Sultan could hardly raise a finger to recover the province. Bengal prospered under its usurper and became famous as 'hell crammed with good things.'

*Oudh* : Oudh was forced to rebel in 1340-41 A.D. Its governor, Ain-ul-Mulk Multani, whom we mentioned under Khusru Shāh, was a loyal officer. He was a great soldier as well as an accomplished man of letters. He had rendered eminent service to the Sultan in mitigating the severity of the famine on a former occasion. When Muhammad was at Swargadwārī, a town founded by him on the banks of the Ganges, during the great famine in Oudh, Ain-ul-Mulk sent him 70 to 80 *lakhs* of *tankās* worth of grain to relieve distress. He had also suppressed the revolt of Nizām Ma'in at Kara and proved his loyalty by flaying the rebel to death and sending his corpse to the capital. Despite all these services the old veteran was ordered into the Deccan, ostensibly to put down disturbances in that quarter, but suspected by Ain-ul-Mulk as a diplomatic transportation to strike at his growing power in Oudh. The Sultan persisting in his orders, the reluctant governor sought refuge in rebellion. However, the revolt was suppressed, the subordinates all executed, and Ain-ul-Mulk himself pardoned and made keeper of the royal gardens at Delhi.

*Sind* : In the following year (1342 A.D.) Muhammad had to march into Sind to put down brigandage which had grown to threat-

ening proportions. The miscreants were captured and forced to embrace Islam. Yet Muhammad's toils were not at an end. Famine, pestilence, rebellion and brigandage had devastated Hindustan for well over a decade, ending in utter exhaustion and the loss of the eastern provinces. When at last things appeared to be settling down to normal in the north, the southern parts of the empire were in revolt.

*South India* : Always a difficult charge to hold, the Deccan and South India could not be expected to remain quiescent during these troublous times. Madura had established an independent Sultanate in 1335 A.D. In the year following (1336 A.D.) were laid the foundations of the mightiest and the most glorious Hindu kingdom of medieval India, viz. Vijayanagara. Krishna Nāyaka, son of Pratāparudra Kākatiya, organised a revolt about 1343 A.D. Vira Ballāla III so long as he was alive after Malik Kāfur's return to Delhi (1312-42 A.D.) had played a leading part in the resurgent Hindu movement of South India. His son, Ballāla IV, joined Krishna Nāyaka, Wārangal was captured, and its Muslim governor, Imād-ul-mulk, fled to Daulatābad. In the words of Ferishta, 'Belāl Deo and Krishna Naik both combined their forces and delivered Ma'bar and Dhorasamundar, . . . from Muslim control. On all sides the flames of war and rebellion were kindled and of the distant provinces nothing remained in the possession of the Sultan except Gujarat and Deogir.'

*The Deccan* : Even in these last named provinces troubles were fast brewing. Kutlugh Khān, the governor of Daulatābad, had long proved too good in his charge. His subordinates embezzled a large part of the public revenue. Muhammad's attempt to replace him with Ain-ul-Mulk Multani was foiled, as we have noted, by the latter's revolt. But the situation demanded urgent attention, and Kutlugh Khān was courteously recalled, Deogiri being tentatively placed in the charge of his brother Ālim-ul-Mulk assisted by four divisional officers. But the remedy proved worse than the disease. As Ferishta records, 'The people, disgusted at the removal of Qutlugh Khān, and the want of capacity displayed by the new administration, rebelled in all quarters and the country was devastated and depopulated in consequence.'

*Mālwa* : An unworthy vintner's son, Aziz Khummār by name, had been appointed governor of Mālwa and Dhār by Muhammad. He treated the *amirs* and nobles in his province with such high-



handedness that they were driven to rebel. The exasperated governor caught hold of no less than eighty of these contumacious persons and had them beheaded in front of his palace to make an example. This act of terrorism created such a panic among the rest that its repercussions were soon felt in the neighbouring provinces of Deogiri and Gujarat as well. The hated Aziz was caught in a blaze of rebellions and put to 'an ignominious death.'

*Gujarat* : The Sultan who could ill-brook such flagrant flouting of his authority marched into Gujarat in a fit of frenzy, and harried the land with fire and sword. Meanwhile Deogiri became a nest of rebellion. Muhammad consequently turned to the settlement of that province where Afghans, Turks and Hindus had alike made common cause against imperial authority. But no sooner he recovered Daulatābad from the rebels, than another formidable rising called him back to Gujarat. There a common shoe-maker and the slave of a Muslim nobleman, Taghi by name, had gathered around him all the forces of disorder and disaffection, both Hindu and Muslim, and occupied and plundered several places like Nehr-wālā, Cambay, and Broach. When Sultan Muhammad came, however, the rebel chief was driven from pillar to post and at last hounded out of the province. After enjoying a brief respite, during which Muhammad restored Gujarat to something like normal conditions, he resumed the pursuit of the fugitive Taghi who had sought refuge in Sind. It was during this interval that the rebels in the Deccan recaptured Daulatābad, slew its governor Imād-ul-mulk (the Sultan's son-in-law), and raised their leader Hasan Kangu to the throne. The latter founded the new independent Muslim kingdom of Bahmani assuming the title of Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh (1347 A.D.), as a counterpoise to the Hindu power of Vijayanagara further south, established eleven years earlier. Muhammad had little compensation in the subjugation of Gīrnār (Jūnāgarh), for its Rāja soon recovered his independence. On his way to Sind the Sultan was taken ill at Gondal.

*Death of Muhammad* : After partial recovery he proceeded to Thatta in Sind, in pursuit of Taghi who had taken refuge with the Sumrah chief. The imperial army had been considerably reinforced from Delhi, but the Sultan's illness grew worse every day, until at last he gave up his ghost on the banks of the Indus, on 20 March 1351, leaving his distracted empire in the lurch. As with Aurangzeb,

three centuries and a half later, the Deccan proved the ruin of Muhammad Tughlak. "Among the Amirs who crowded his camp, observes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "he looked about for support to buttress up his tottering power, but they were all mediocrities without any plan or policy and could render him but little assistance. What seriously hampered him was the lack of capable governors and officers to carry into effect his plans. The inefficiency of the men on the spot emphasised the importance of the personal factor to such an extent that the Sultan's presence became necessary to restore order in the disturbed areas. The local administrations, paralysed by persistent opposition and mismanagement, could make no stand against the rebels whose power was daily increasing. Neither at Devagiri nor in Gujarat the local administration displayed any vigour to check the forces of disorder and the Sultan alone had to bear the brunt of the opposition. The imperial army, too, does not seem to have shown any remarkable efficiency ; probably the unusual severities of the Sultan had exhausted its patience and chilled its enthusiasm." (*Qaraunah Turks*, p. 247.)

#### *A Tragedy of Dilettanteism :*

Muhammad Tughlak ruled for twenty-six years from 1325 to 1351 A.D. It might be said with truth that during the first ten years the Sultan was busy creating discontent that could not be allayed in the remaining sixteen years. The history of the rebellions all over the Empire, from centre to periphery, that we have briefly sketched was more replete with disorders than could be indicated within our ambit. For example, the accession of the new Sultan was taken as the signal for revolt by his own nephew Bahā-ud-dīn Gashtasp in the Deccan (1326-7 A.D.). The rebel was pursued to his retreat in Kāmpli, whose Rāja fought both chivalrously and valiantly in defence of the refugee and sacrificed himself and his family in Rajput style committing *johār*. The Rāja's eleven sons were taken captive, converted to Islam and then raised to the rank of *amirs* and granted *mansabs*. The unfortunate nephew of the Sultan was himself taken before his uncle, reviled by the ladies in the *harem*, flayed to death, and his flesh cooked and served up to his family. It is strange to find such a Sultan being appreciated and exculpated, on the ground of such excesses being common to his age, by so careful a scholar as Dr. Ishwari Prasad. "Muhammad who was

one of the ablest men of the age," he writes, not in this context, though, "behaved with great tact." '*Thus shall those guilty of treason perish*' was Muhammad Tughlak's verdict; and disobedience to his erratic will was the very definition of treason for the Sultan. "My remedy for rebels," he declared, "is the sword. I employ punishment and use the sword, so that a cure may be effected by suffering. The more the people resist, the more I inflict chastisement." This was certainly not the attitude of "one of the ablest men of the age" who "behaved with great tact," especially as that pronouncement was made when the Sultan had realised, as he declared to Baranī: "My kingdom is diseased, and no treatment cures it. The physician cures the headache, and fever follows; he strives to allay the fever, and something else supervenes. So in my kingdom disorders have broken out; if I suppress them in one place, they appear in another; if I allay them in one district, another becomes disturbed."

It is difficult to challenge the description of the Sultan by the contemporary foreign observer, Ibn Battuta, who had neither an axe to grind nor a frown to fear:

'This king of all men,' wrote the Moor, 'is the one who most loves to dispense gifts and to shed blood. His gateway is never free from a beggar whom he has relieved and a corpse which he has slain. Tales are spread abroad among the people of his generosity and courage, as of his bloodshed and vindictiveness towards offenders. With all this he is the humblest of men and the most eager to show justice and truth. The rites of religion find full observance with him, and he is strict in the matter of prayer and in punishing its neglect. But what is pre-eminent in him is generosity.....when there was such a famine in India that a *maund* of corn cost six *dīnars* [three guineas], he ordered six months' food to be distributed to all the inhabitants of Delhi from the crown stores. Each person, great or small, free or slave, was to have a pound and a half Morocco weight [about 2 lbs.] a day.'

This balanced estimate of the unbalanced Sultan is hard to beat. In spite of his wonted sense of justice and generosity a careful and unbiased examination of Muhammad's acts will confirm Ibn Battuta's observation that '*This king punished little faults like great crimes.*' It was the outcome of megalomania. Baranī tells us, he never talked over his plans with any of his councillors or friends. 'Whatever he conceived, he considered good, but in enforcing his schemes he lost territories, disgusted his people, and emptied his treasury. Embarrassment followed embarrassment, and confusion became worse

confounded. The ill-feeling of the people gave rise to outbreaks and revolts. The rules for enforcing the royal schemes grew daily more oppressive. The tribute of most of the distant countries and provinces was lost, and many of the soldiers and servants were scattered and left in remote lands. Deficiency appeared in the treasury. The mind of the Sultan lost its balance. In the extreme weakness and harshness of his temper he abandoned himself to severity. When he found that his orders did not work so well as he wished, he became yet more embittered against his people.'

When rebellions were rife in the country Muhammad turned for Pontifical recognition to the Caliph of Cairo (1341 A.D.) in order to increase his prestige in the eyes of the Muslims. *Firmāns* were received from the Caliph, from time to time, and the Sultan went to the extent of substituting the name of the Commander of the Faithful to that of his own in the *Khutbah* and some of his coins. "So fulsome was the Sultan's flattery of the Khalifah," writes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "that his name was inscribed not merely on the coins, but in all important edifices of the state." It is indeed pitiable to find this "unquestionably the ablest man among the crowned heads of the middle ages" miss his mark so miserably as even Dr. Ishwari Prasad admits : "The Khalifah's patent was a poor substitute for sympathy and confidence. The Sultan persisted in his arbitrary course, and his vindictive attitude made it more and more difficult for him to win back the allegiance of his famine stricken subjects. The hope that a diploma from the Khalifah would make them cease to rebel against their ruler proved futile and towards the middle of 746 A.D. (A.H. ?) the Sultan was plunged into difficulties from which he could never extricate himself." (*Qaraunah Turks*, p. 183.)

After what has been stated so far it would be futile to discuss whether Muhammad's insensate cruelties were due to caprice or the just retribution of a sovereign inspired with the best of intentions but living in an age when Justice itself struck mercilessly only to be the more just. It is said that Muhammad, being far in advance of his age, permitted aggrieved persons to prefer suits even against himself in law courts ; but one of the instances cited to illustrate this claim is that of Sheikh Zadah Jami who, according to Yahya bin Ahmad, was confined in an iron cage and ultimately executed for daring to tell the Sultan to his face that he was a tyrant. To be truthful, Muhammad did indeed call upon the Sheikh to prove his

charge before the *Kāzi*, but it was left to the tribunal of history to pardon the outspoken critic of an unforgiving autocrat. Dr. Ishwari Prasad agrees : "the barbarous punishment inflicted by the Sultan on the Shaikh is in agreement with the tenor of his policy as reflected in the pages of Ibn Batūtah."

Equally futile is it to investigate whether Muhammad was really *mad* as he has too often been described. We do not need the testimony of even a single contemporary of the Sultan to confirm the impression that is unmistakably created by his erratic conduct. Whatever be the symptoms of madness according to pathologists, it is difficult to class Muhammad Tughlak among sane monarchs ; that he was not demented as a private individual cannot alter the verdict of history upon his political insanity. Lane-Poole finds in his stupendous failure "a tragedy of high intentions self defeated." That Muhammad's intentions were exalted cannot be denied. Just as he had improved his coinage, so did he truly desire to reform his state and his people. He is said to have abolished *sati* among the Hindus, built free hospitals, endowed schools, organised poor-relief, established state factories employing thousands of workers, patronised traders, and shown in a hundred different ways his solicitude for the welfare of his subjects. But these only constituted the silver lining that fringed the dark cloud that hung over the political sky of India during twenty-six long years under the name of Muhammad Tughlak. He was a dilettante like Humāyun, but lacking in the humanity of that equally ill-starred Mughal emperor ; Muhammad also had not Humāyun's chance to redeem the tragedy of his imperial dilettantism. The successors of the two afford a study in many contrasts.

#### *The Criteria of Capricious Clio :*

The Muse of History is a capricious dame ; indeed, like the mollusc clio, she often allows herself to become mere 'whale's food.' That is how she has come to deify her omnivorous children, the Napoleons and Chingiz Khāns. These have supplied the criteria for historians too long. "When men call a king a kind man," the little Corsican is reported to have observed, "his reign has been a failure." Hence, to confine ourselves to the Tughlak dynasty, Muhammad must be lionised at the expense of Ghiyās-ud-dīn and Fīrūz. We have seen how the first of the Tughlaks did not allow either his humanity or his statesmanship to be swallowed by his martial vigour ; yet his Empire endured during the period of his life time and even longer until it was

undermined by the wisdom of his too wise son. Firūz Tughlak lost not a tittle of his embarrassed and encumbered inheritance; he indeed redeemed more of it than could have been expected of a Koranolater like him. During a reign of over thirty-seven years (Muhammad ruled for 26), such dominion as had come to him was both free from the disorders of his predecessor's making and incomparably more prosperous from the prince to the peasants. If this pacified, enriched, and integrated legacy was squandered by his unworthy successors, the blame for it cannot be justly laid at the doors of Firūz. The poison introduced by Muhammad was too corrosive even against the statesmanlike antidotes of his successor, and found more sympathetic agents in the later Tughlaks.

Firūz was neither an Asoka nor an Akbar, both of whom have been noted for their religious toleration. Firūz was a fanatic like Aurangzeb, though unlike him a wine-bibber. But in spite of this he had more of constructive wisdom in him than his dilettante predecessor possessed. Lack of martial vigour, and the unwisdom of feudalising the kingdom are the only other charges that have been levelled against him. We shall examine how debit and credit equated under the new régime.

#### *Accession of Firūz Tughlak :*

When 'the (late) king was freed of his people, and they of their king,' to use Badāuni's expression, the capital was in the charge of the old minister Khwāja Jahān, and the army leaderless. Confusion prevailed in the camp, and, to prevent its repetition in the capital, Khwāja Jahān proclaimed a 'supposititious' son of Muhammad Tughlak king at Delhi. Firūz, son of Rajab (brother of Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak) through a Rajput wife, was very reluctant to assume the crown in spite of his formal nomination by his late cousin (for Muhammad had no son) and pressure from the army. At last matters reached such a pass that he had to yield as a matter of duty. Muhammad, always tender towards foreigners, had with him a large contingent of foreign Mughals. These attacked the rest of the army on their patron's death, and, but for Firūz making up his mind, the Sindhis and Mughals would have decided the fate of all. Firūz accepted the crown, defeated the enemy, and piloted the army, safely back to the capital.

Though confronted with a rival on the throne, difficulties soon resolved themselves. Khwāja Jahān, realising his error, submitted to his lawful master who pardoned him and directed him to go to the fief of

Samana. But the nobles taking the law into their own hands, like Bairām Khān in the case of Hemu, slew the old minister even against the inclinations of their sovereign.

Another incident which also throws light on the character of the new Sultan might be narrated here. Khudāwand-zāda, a sister of Muhammad, in spite of her reverential treatment by Fīrūz, plotted to take his life in favour of her own son Dāwar Malīk. The design was betrayed to the Sultan, but she suffered no worse fate than a reduction of her pension and the banishment of her husband who was the prime instigator in the conspiracy.

To all outward seeming, therefore, Fīrūz looked like the much too lenient Jalāl-ud-dīn Khaljī. But if a parallel is at all to be found among the earlier Sultans of Delhi, Fīrūz resembled Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad more than any one else. Like Nāsir-ud-dīn he was too much inclined towards religion, and found his Balban in Khān-Jahān Mukbūl, an efficient minister. Both sovereigns were of a mild and forbearing disposition, but Fīrūz, as we shall presently see, was by far the more capable administrator.

One of the first benevolent acts of Fīrūz after his accession was, like the Athenian Solon, to cancel all accumulated debts and mortgages. Those who had monetary obligations towards the state, having been helped with loans, etc., during the troubled days of the great famine, were excused and called upon to pardon the dead Sultan for all the unjust acts of oppression they had suffered at his hands. Even the survivors of the dead victims were made to sign written pardons, with due witnesses, and the deeds buried in a chest placed near the tomb of Muhammad against the Day of Judgment. But the real atonement, though vicarious, for all Muhammad's sins was in the prosperity and peace that Fīrūz made possible, for a long suffering people, during his thirty-seven years' rule. The wisest act of Muhammad Tughlak was the nomination of his wiser and less sophisticated successor.

#### *Military Campaigns :*

Un-martial though he undoubtedly was Fīrūz vindicated his choice by undertaking military campaigns wherever duty called. He did not suffer from that itch for conquest which both Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and Muhammad Tughlak had always felt. He rather followed the very wise policy that even the militant Balban had considered wholesome for his situation. To rule well a limited dominion, he

rightly judged, was, better than to scramble after an unruly vastness. The lessons of his fiery predecessor's experience were too fresh to be ignored.

*Bengal* : Even the ambitious Muhammad had been compelled to reconcile himself to the loss of Bengal. Firūz, therefore, might not have been expected to meddle with that province at all. However, in the very next year after his accession to the throne (1352 A.D.), he was provoked by the chauvinism of Shams-ud-dīn Ilyās Shāh who had made himself master of Eastern and Western Bengal and also attacked Tirhut with a view to annexation. Firūz, in spite of his disinclination for war, felt called upon to lead an expedition. He did this in a most noteworthy fashion, yet very characteristic of his entire nature. Marching with a very large army towards his retreating enemy, he issued a proclamation to the people of Bengal, which Dr. Ishwari Prasad has characterised as "one of the most extraordinary documents in the history of the Sultanate of Delhi, and throws much light upon the mild policy of Firūz." Though too long for full citation, the following excerpt cannot be missed :—

Calling upon all classes of people to loyally assist their overlord, the Sultan of Delhi, and promising them, in return, all sorts of concessions, the proclamation read: 'Whereas it has come to our auspicious ear that Ilyas Haji has been committing oppression and high-handedness upon the people of the territory of Lakhnauti and Tirhut, shedding unnecessary blood, even shedding the blood of women, although it is a well-established proposition in every creed and doctrine that no woman, even if she be a Kāfir, should be slain: And whereas the said Ilyas Haji has been levying illegal cesses not sanctioned by the law of Islam, and thus putting the people into trouble; there being no security of life and property, no safety for honour and chastity.....And whereas he has exceeded the limit, and publicly rebelled against our authority, therefore we have approached with an invincible army for the purpose of opening this territory, and for the happiness of the people thereof; desiring thereby to deliver all from this tyranny, to convert the wounds of his oppressions by the salves of justice and mercy, and that the tree of their existence, withered by the hot pestilential wind of tyranny and oppression, might flourish and fructify by the limpid water of our bounty.'

After this, having won a military triumph in the field of battle, and driven the enemy into the fort of Ikḍala, the soft-hearted Sultan, true to the sentiments above expressed, shrank from the last act of seizure because of the shrieks of women pathetically wailing within the stronghold: 'To storm the fort, put more Musalmans to the sword, and expose honourable women to ignominy, would be a crime for which he could not answer on the Day of Judgment, and which



would leave no difference between him and the Mughals.' So he abandoned the province and returned to the capital (1354 A.D.).

However, a second interference was necessitated (1359 A.D.) by an appeal from Zafar Khān, son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-dīn, the first independent Muslim ruler of eastern Bengal. The imperial army consisting of 70,000 horse, nearly 500 elephants and a very considerable infantry, floated down the Ganges. On the way Fīrūz commemorated his late cousin by founding the great city of Jaunpur (Juna-pūr). As on the former occasion, the enemy was besieged in the fortress of Ikḍala, and, finally, matters were pressed to a settlement by which Sikander, the successor of Shams-ud-dīn, agreed to part with Sonārgaon in favour of Zafar Khān. This was undoubtedly a triumph for Fīrūz, though his suppliant Zafar Khān preferred the ease of the imperial Court at Delhi to the arduous task of ruling at Sonārgaon, which he relinquished.

*Orissa*: Far from immediately returning to Delhi, Fīrūz pushed his way into Jājnagar (modern Orissa), fed his army on its rich produce, destroyed the temple of Jagannāth (Puri), the eastern replica of Somnāth, and like Mahmūd Ghazni, returned to his capital (1360 A.D.) receiving the submission of the Rāi of Jājnagar and a few other Hindu chieftains on his way.

*Nagarkot*: This had been conquered by Muhammad Tughlak during his Himalayan expedition in 1337 A.D. Its famous temple of Jwālāmukhi (Kāngra) had also been plundered by the Idol-breaker from Ghazni in (1008-9 A.D.). Fīrūz was drawn towards it on account of its Hindu Rāja's depredations into the surrounding country. The Sultan, who had started for the subjugation of Daulatābad, heard of the activities of the Rāja of Nagarkot and turned towards it in 1360-61 A.D. The fort was besieged for six months and then the Rāja having submitted was pardoned and reinstated. Fīrūz being attracted by some of the Sanskrit books which he found in the temple library got them translated into Persian.

*Sind*: In 1362-63 A.D. Fīrūz carried out his long deferred campaign against Thatta to avenge the wrongs suffered by the imperial army at the time of Muhammad's death. The expeditionary force consisted of 90,000 cavalry, besides elephants and numerous infantry. But on account of the provisions having run short, this vast army had to be diverted into Gujarat for a time. Here, through the treachery of guides, they were led into the Rann of Cutch and came to be very

nearly lost in the swamps. For six months nothing was heard of the imperial army, while famine devastated its numbers. But ultimately it debouched into the fertile plains of Gujarat. After replenishing his reduced forces and provisions, and dismissing the delinquent governor of Gujarat, Firūz returned to Sind. The deserters were caught hold of and pilloried instead of being executed; such of the soldiers as were inadequately equipped were given sumptuous allowances for refurnishing themselves. Reinforcements were ordered from Delhi, and, thanks to the efforts of the great Khān-Jahān Makbūl, they were rallied from all parts of the Empire: Badāun, Kanauj, Jaunpur, Bihar, Tirhut, Chānderi and Dhār, etc. The Sindhis were outnumbered and over-awed into submission, and the victorious Sultan returned to Delhi, taking Jām Babaniya with him, appointing his brother in his stead. The conquered Jām appears to have remained loyal to Firūz all his life. Dr. Ishwari Prasad, however, finds in this expedition, "a singular instance of the Sultan's fatuity and lack of strategical skill."

#### *A Great Administrator :*

Though Firūz Tughlak marred his statesmanship by his religious bigotry towards the Hindus as well as Muslim non-conformists, like Aurangzeb, he proved himself otherwise a great administrator. The days of religious toleration were a long way off, and Firūz, son of a Hindu mother though he was, could not be expected to be singular in this respect. All his predecessors had thought it their duty as 'true believers' to discriminate against the Hindus. Even Muhammad Tughlak, who has been considered to have been far ahead of his times in several respects, had converted the Sindhi rebels and the Princes of Kāmpli to Islam. Firūz, though he destroyed some temples, prohibited building new ones, and imposed *jizya* on the hitherto exempted Brāhmanas; he also reduced the last on appeal, from 10 *tankās* to 50 *jitals*, as well as got Sanskrit works translated into Persian. As against this common parochialism of the age, we have his record of secular administrative achievement, which certainly entitles him to the front rank among the Muslim rulers of medieval India. The public utilities that Firūz created were not a monopoly of the ruling class. As Dr. Ishwari Prasad admits, the welfare of the people was "the watchword of the new administration, and the Hindus and Muslims both were benefited by its activity."

*Revenue System:* 'When kingdoms are obviously ruined,' Ghiyās-ud-din Tughlak thought, 'it is due to the oppressiveness of the

revenue system and the excessive royal demand ; and ruin proceeds from destructive governors and officials.' But, as Moreland has observed, " the reign of Ghiyāsuddin was too short to establish a new tradition, and its main interest lies rather in the formulation of policy than in the results achieved." Ghiyāsuddin, he adds, " thus stands in the line of succession from Balban : his son was in a few years' time to furnish a striking example of the danger of departing from his policy." (*Agrarian System*, p. 45).

The unpractical theorist in Mahammad Tughlak revealed himself in his fiscal policy as well. The revival of the pernicious system of Farming and Assignment, which ultimately ruined the Empire, has been unfairly attributed to Firūz Tughlak. Alā-ud-dīn had abolished it and substituted cash payments as a sounder system. Under his immediate successors, owing to the spate of voluptuousness and anarchy that overtook the administration, there was a sudden lapse. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, though he tried to discourage Farming, had too short a time to restore fully Alā-ud-dīn's wise order. Muhammad was, certainly, not in favour of the anarchical system ; but circumstances, for which he was himself partly responsible, soon forced his hands. The disorders in the Doab, in particular, made Muhammad think of fiscal re-organisation. Like Akbar and Joseph II of Austria after him, he contemplated a uniform and centralised system, for which he appointed a Royal Commission and spent about two crores of *tankās* in land-surveys, grants, etc. The aim was that 'not a span of land was to be left untilled,' and 'wheat was to replace barley, sugar-cane to replace wheat, vines and dates to replace sugar-cane'. The idea was perfect in conception like Muhammad's other plans, but the execution broke down. The fate of the River Country during a full quarter century is thus summed up by Moreland : " ruinous enhancement of revenue, loss of market, restriction of cultivation, rebellion, drastic punishment, attempts at restoration defeated by the failure of the rains, and, finally, a spectacular policy of reconstruction, ending in an almost complete fiasco." (*Ibid*, p. 48). Then, the political state of the country did not permit of any other system but that of Assignment and Farming of revenues. Baranī complains of Muhammad's patronage of men of low-caste, barbers, liquor-sellers, gardeners, weavers, etc., who were made equal to nobles, and received high appointments in Court and provinces. Aziz Khummār's is a case in point. Another speculative Farmer of revenue was the one appointed

at Bidar for a payment of one *crore* of *tankās*: "by occupation a corn-merchant, timorous, incompetent." A third 'contemptible, drug-soaked, little idiot' was given a Farm at Kara "without capital, adherents or resources of any kind," and "failed to collect even a tenth part of the sum he had promised to pay, and then gathering a rabble round him, went into rebellion, and assumed the title of king." Moreland concludes, "Farming and Assignment may thus be regarded as the most prominent agrarian institutions of the reign" (of Muhammad Tughlak).

If Firūz Shāh's revenue policy is to be properly understood, the antecedents above summarised cannot be ignored. Sultan Firūz, says the admiring chronicler, 'under divine inspiration,' spread all the revenues of his territories among his people. The various districts of the fiefs were also divided.' The system is best described in Afif's own words:—

'The soldiers of the army received grants of land [*jagirs*] enough to support them in comfort, and the irregulars received payment from the government treasury. Those soldiers who did not receive their pay in this manner were, according to their necessity, supplied with assignments upon the revenues. When these assignments of the soldier arrived in the fiefs, the holders used to get about half the total amount from the holders of the fiefs. It was the practice of certain persons in those days to buy up these assignments, which was an accommodation to both parties. They used to give one-third of the value for them in the city and receive one half in the districts. The purchasers of these assignments carried on a traffic in them, and gaining a good profit, many of them got rich and made their fortunes.'

Whatever its ultimate consequences, it was this avenue to Fortune that kept the provinces quiet during the long reign of Firūz. Peoples' energies were employed in peaceful and constructive occupations and 'By the blessing of God and favourable seasons, abundance of the necessities of life prevailed, not only in the capital, but throughout his dominions...Grain was so cheap that in the city of Delhi wheat was 8 *jitals* a *maund* and grain and barley 4 *jitals*. A camp-follower could give his horse a feed of 10 *sīrs* [ 20 lbs. ] of corn for one *jital*. Fabrics of all kinds were cheap, and silk goods, both white and coloured, were of moderate price. Orders were given for the reduction of the price of sweetmeats in accord with the general fall of prices.'

Though the dominions were circumscribed, the revenues were large; not because assessment was enhanced (it was actually reduced), but because of increased prosperity in all directions. The revenue was fixed after a careful examination of the condition of the

land. The titles of holders were scrutinised—*Quo Warranto?*—and fief-holders asked to establish their claims in courts of law in doubtful cases. Khwāja Hisām-ud-dīn Junaid, the assessor of revenue, toured through the kingdom and submitted a report, making suitable suggestions for reform. Abuses were put down and the State demands reduced. No less than twenty-three or twenty-six different taxes were abolished, either because they were vexatious or because they were not in conformity with the *Korān*. The State had hitherto appropriated four-fifths of the spoils of war, leaving only one-fifth to the soldiers, but Firūz restored the scriptural balance by the interchange of the State and soldiers' shares. The *khirāj*, *zakāt*, *kham*s, and *jizya* were the only taxes sanctioned by the *Korān*, and Firūz would take no more. Even the irrigation cess was levied after due consultation with the *Ulema* who appear to have unanimously declared that 'the King was entitled to the right of *sharb*.'

In the words of the *Tarikh-i-Firūz Shāhi*, 'Sultan Firūz made the laws of the Prophet his guide, acting zealously upon the principles they laid down, and prohibiting all that was inconsistent therewith. No demand in excess of the regular government dues was to be made, and the officer who made any such exaction was to make full reparation. Brocades, silks and goods required for the royal establishments were to be purchased at the market price, and the money paid.....Such rules were made that the *rayats* grew rich and were satisfied..... Their homes were replete with grain, property, horses, and furniture; every one had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments, and no house was wanting in excellent beds and couches. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The whole realm of Delhi was blessed with the bounties of the Almighty.'

The revenues of the territories of Delhi, according to the same authority, were six *crores* and eighty-five *lacs* of *tankās*; and of the Doab eighty *lacs*. The royal gardens alone brought in 180,000 *tankās* a year, after deducting all the expenses. 'Sultan Firūz,' the chronicler tells us, 'had a great taste for the laying out of gardens which he took great pains to beautify.'

*Public Works* : The 'master-passion' of Firūz, however, was to build. He "indulged a passion for building," writes Sir Wolseley Haig, "which equalled, if it did not surpass, that of the Roman Emperor Augustus.....the towns of Firūzābād or New Delhi, Fathābād, Hissār, Firūzpūr near Budaun, and Jaunpur were founded by him, and he is credited with the construction or restoration of four mosques, thirty palaces, two hundred caravanserais, five reservoirs, five hospitals, a hundred tombs, ten baths, ten monumental pillars, and a hundred bridges." This is by no means an exhaustive catalogue. To it might

he added the 150 wells he constructed for the use of travellers and the five canals he built for irrigation. The most important of these was 150 miles long, and conveyed the waters of the Jamuna into the arid tract in which he founded the city of Hisār-i-Firūza. His chief architect was Malik Ghāzi Shāhna, whose deputy was Abdul Hakk or Jāhir Sundhar. The plan of every building, with estimates, had to be submitted to the *Diwān-i-Wizārat* before money was sanctioned for its construction.

"Asiatic kings," says V. A. Smith, "as a rule, show no interest in buildings erected by their predecessors, which usually are allowed to decay uncared for. Firoz Shāh was peculiar in devoting much attention to the repair and rebuilding of 'the structures of former kings and ancient nobles...giving the restoration of those buildings the priority over his own new constructions.'" Thus, the two inscribed Asoka pillars standing near Delhi were transplanted from Topra (in the Ambāla District) and Meerut. Afif, the contemporary chronicler, describes how this arduous task was accomplished: 'A number of large boats had been collected, some of which could carry 5,000 and 7,000 *manṣ* of grain, and the least of them 2,000 *manṣ*. The column was very ingeniously transferred to these boats, and was then conducted to Firūzābād, where it was landed and conveyed into Kushk with infinite labour and skill'.

All these herculean tasks required man-power, which Firūz specially recruited by organising a corps of slaves. We learn from the author above cited that

'the Sultan was very diligent in procuring slaves, and he carried his care so far as to command his great fief-holders and officers to capture slaves whenever they were at war, and to pick out and send the best for the service of the Court .....Those chiefs who brought many slaves received the highest favour.....About 12,000 slaves became artisans of various kinds. Forty thousand were every day in readiness to attend as guards in the Sultan's equipage or at the palace. Altogether, in the city and in the various fiefs, there were 1,80,000 slaves, for whose maintenance and comfort the Sultan took especial care. The institution took root in the very centre of the land, and the Sultan looked upon its due regulation as one of his incumbent duties.'

Slavery in no form is even a tolerable institution; but under medieval conditions, where a slave was technically a purchased or captured person, who was often manumitted and could rise to any position according to merit, it had not the odd flavour that we feel about it. To Firūz slavery was also the avenue of propagating Islam, for a slave became as a matter of course a convert. A separate-

establishment with a *Diwān* and *Jāo-Shughūrī* was maintained for the administration of the Slave Department. Thus the institution which had long existed was given by Fīrūz a local habitation and a name.

*Abolition of Torture:* The penal code of the age was a savage one. We have seen how savagely it was administered even under so enlightened a prince as Muhammad Tughlak undoubtedly was intellectually. But it was left to his less appreciated successor to mitigate its ferocity. V. A. Smith, who is by no means partial to Fīrūz Tughlak, writes: "One reform, the abolition of mutilation and torture, deserves unqualified commendation, and the orders must have been acted on to a considerable extent during his lifetime." Then he cites an extract from the autobiographical memoirs (*Fatūhāt*) of Fīrūz describing 'many varieties of torture,' such as, 'amputation of hands and feet, ears and nose; tearing out the eyes, pouring molten lead into the throat, crushing the bones of the hands and feet with mallets, burning the body with fire, driving iron nails into the hands, feet, and bosom, cutting the sinews sawing men asunder; these and many similar tortures were practised.' But the Sultan proceeds, 'the great and merciful God made me, His servant, hope and seek for His mercy by devoting myself to prevent the unlawful killing of Musalmāns and the infliction of any kind of torture *upon them or upon any men.*'

We also learn that "If a traveller died on the road, the feudal chiefs and *muqaddams* calling together the Qazis and other Muslims examined the body of the deceased and drew up a report certifying under the seal of the Qazi that no wound was discernible on the body and then they buried it."

*Religious Intolerance:* It is a pity that such a Sultan should have besmirched his fair name by acts of religious intolerance such as he confesses to in his already cited memoirs. Not merely Hindus, but even Muslim dissenters did not escape his Inquisition: 'I seized them all and I convicted them of their errors. On the most zealous I inflicted capital punishment (*siyasat*), and the rest I visited with censure (*tāzir*), and threats of public punishment. Their books I burnt in public and, by the grace of God, the influence of this sect (*Shiāhs*) was entirely suppressed. Again about the Hindus: 'I forbade the infliction of any severe punishment on the Hindus in general, but I destroyed their idol temples and instead thereof raised mosques.' Indeed the days of Zain-ul-'Ābidīn and Akbar were far off.

Towards Muslims of the orthodox class, Firūz was paternal to a degree: "The Sultan's administration of poor relief," writes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "deserves high praise. His solicitude for public welfare led him to issue instructions to the Kotwals to ascertain the number of the unemployed. These men were asked to apply to the Diwan, and occupation was provided for them according to their capacity. Those who could read and write were employed in the royal house-hold, and those who showed aptitude for some sort of practical work were attached to the royal establishments, while those who wished to become slaves of some noble or grandee were favoured with letters of recommendation. To enable poor Muslims to marry their daughters, the Sultan established a regular charity office (*Diwan-i-Khairat*), which considered each case on its merits, and then recommended for a grant of marriage allowance. The applicants of the first class were given fifty *tankās*, while those of the second and third were allowed thirty and twenty-five *tankās* respectively. A long-felt need was satisfied, and men came from far and wide to avail of the benefactions of the Sultan."

*Death of Firūz:* Withal, the Sultan, despite his royal weakness for wine, led a simple life like Aurangzeb's, and dined from earthen instead of gold or silver plates; gorgeous finery of all sorts was interdicted in his presence; and pictures were banned on banners or ensigns. A large share of the administrative achievement of Firūz belongs also to the very capable minister of his earlier years. This was Khān-Jahān Makbūl, a Hindu convert from Telingana. He had already made a mark under Muhammad Tughlak and had been rewarded with the fief of Multan. During the long absences of Firūz from the capital, Makbūl managed the affairs of the State, both civil and military, with remarkable devotion and efficiency, although he had 2,000 women of various nationalities in his seraglio to engross his pleasures. He died about 1372 A.D. when he was succeeded by his son who thereafter became Khān-i-Jahān. Meanwhile, Firūz too, was fast aging, and latterly became a tool in the hands of ambitious intriguers. Khān-i-jahān himself worked upon his mind, and like Malik Kāfur in the last days of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, poisoned the mind of the Sultan against his own son Muhammad. But the latter, by a bold strategy, conquered the affections of his father and got himself designated heir-apparent. Civil strife ensued between the partisans of the chief minister and the Crown Prince, and the aged Sultan was obliged to confer the insignia of royalty upon his grandson, Tughlak Shāh,



son of Fatah Khān. Not long after this final public act of his, Firūz died at the age of eighty, in October 1388, and the Empire was plunged in anarchy. "The death of Firūz," as Moreland observes, "marked the end of an epoch. In the course of a few years the kingdom broke up, and during the first half of the fifteenth century there was no longer a single predominant Muslim power in India." We shall see in the next chapter how chaos overtook the country again.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.	
1381	Peasants' Revolt in England; Watt Taylor murdered in the presence of Richard II.
1396	Gujarat independent.
1399	Jaunpur independent.
1401	Mālwa and Khāndesh independent.
1405	Death of Timūr.
1411-31	Ahmed Shah king of Gujarat; foundation of Ahmedābad city.
1414-50	Saiyids rule at Delhi.
1415	Huss burnt at the stake as a heretic in Europe.
1417-67	Zain-ul Ābidin, fore-runner of Akbar, king of Kashmir.
1420	Nicolo Conti, Italian visitor, at Vijayanagara; first available record of European impressions.
1443	Abdur Razzāk, Persian envoy at Vijayanagara, finds the city the greatest in the world.

## CHAPTER VII

### CHAOS COME AGAIN

The period of 138 years intervening between the death of Firūz Tughlak (1388 A.D.) and the victory of Bābur over Ibrāhim Lodi at Pānīpat (1526 A.D.) was one that witnessed a chaos of kingdoms such as we found in India between the death of Harsha (647 A.D.) and the overthrow of Prithvirāja Chauhān by Muhammad Ghūri on the field of Tarāori (1192 A.D.). Between the last mentioned date and the rebellion of Jalāl-ud-dīn Ahsan Shāh in Ma'bar, with which commenced the disruption of the Tughlak Empire (1335 A.D.), Delhi had become the mistress of the most extensive dominion seen in India since the days of Asoka. But this apogee of imperial power was reached only about 1311 A.D., when Malik Kāfur subdued Madura, and enjoyed during a brief quarter century up to 1335 A.D. During the next sixteen years of Muhammad Tughlak's reign (1335-51 A.D.) the Empire was reduced to Hindustan above the Vindhya, excluding Bengal (since 1337 A.D.), with a precarious sovereignty over Gujarat and Daulatābad. Even the last named province was virtually lost in 1347 A.D. with the foundation of the Bahmani Kingdom by Hasan Kangu Bahman Shāh. Had Muhammad Tughlak survived longer, or had Firūz failed to 'convert the wounds of his oppressions by the salves of justice and mercy', the tree of their existence would have withered much earlier than 1388 A.D. Far from being responsible for the disruption of the Empire, Firūz deferred its death dance for thirty-seven years. Then came the inevitable deluge. The full-moon of Muslim Empire in India was reduced to a bare crescent round Delhi, within the next twenty-five years (1388-1412 A.D.). During the dark night of the new-moon (extinction of the Tughlak dynasty) the political sky of India was studded with innumerable stars and planets of varying magnitudes (the Hindu and Muslim kingdoms whose history we shall briefly sketch in this chapter).

#### I. KINGDOMS OF NORTH INDIA

Under the six Tughlak successors of Firūz,—Tughlak Shāh II (1388), Abū Bakr (1388-90), Muhammad II (1390-94), Sikander (1394), Mahmūd and Nasrat together (1394-98), and Mahmūd alone (1399-1412), North India found itself divided into as many kingdoms:

(1) Delhi, (2) Sind, (3) Gujarat, (4) Mālwa, (5) Jaunpur, and (6) Bengal. All of these were provinces of the Delhi Empire, but had now become independent. Besides these, there were also (a) the Muslim kingdom of Kashmir and (b) the Hindu principalities of Rajputāna; not to mention Nepal, Assam, and Orissa, which were too distant to play any important part in the political destinies of the country. None of the last named five had come under the sway of the Sultanate of Delhi, though all of them had been attacked and raided. We must run through the gamut to feel the discordant notes they produced, until India was once again brought to harmony by another Empire of the Crescent, viz. the Mughal.

(1) *Delhi*: Though Fīrūz was not the originator of the practice of granting fiefs, he reduced it to a regular system which bore anarchical results when he was dead. "The grants indeed amounted to vice-royalties of great power, and we find large districts and even provinces assigned to eminent nobles. Thus Karra and Dalmau were granted to Mardan Daulat with the title of 'King of the East'; Oudh and Sandila and Koil formed separate fiefs; Jaunpur and Zafarābad were given to another Amir; Gujarat to Sikandar Khan, and Bihar to Bir Afghan," etc. The last days of the pious Sultan, as we saw, were darkened by the conflicts between Khān-i-jahān and Prince Muhammad. The grandson, who was finally chosen to succeed, Tughlak II, proved a rake, and was killed by the *Amirs* and slaves "before he had lolled on the throne five months." Another grandson, Abu Bakr, succeeded, only to be superseded by his uncle Muhammad, the first choice of Fīrūz. Muhammad reigned four years (1390-94 A.D.), but vexed with a series of rebellions by Hindu chiefs as well as the great Muslim fief-holders. He vented his wrath against the vast army of slaves, a large number of whom were either put to death or otherwise persecuted and banished. But the disruptive forces continued uninterrupted. Muhammad's successor Humāyun, though he proudly styled himself Sikander Shāh, died within six weeks of his accession and made room for his brother Mahmūd. Mahmūd had a rival in his cousin, Nasrat Shāh, and the two set up independent Courts, one in Old Delhi and the other in Fīrūzābād, the new capital. Both were puppet princes, mere pawns and play-things in the hands of factious nobles.

#### *Timūr's Invasion :*

"Such was the chaotic state of the kingdom of Delhi when Timūr descended upon it with his ninety-two regiments of a thousand horse

each. The great conqueror whose career is familiar to all in the pages of Gibbon, had already overrun all Persia and Mesopotamia to the frontier of the Ottoman empire in Asia Minor on the west, and occupied Afghanistan on the east, before the wealth of India drew him to the invariable road of Central Asian invaders." Though his fiery followers were at first greatly hesitant, on account of the enervating climate of Hindustan, they were enthused by an appeal to their fanaticism. "My object in the invasion of Hindustan," said Timūr, "is to lead a campaign against the infidels, to convert them to the True Faith according to the command of the Prophet (on whom be the blessing of God!), to purify the land from the defilement of misbelief and polytheism, and overthrow the temples and idols, whereby we shall be *Ghāzis* and *Mujahids*, champions and soldiers of the Faith before God."

The familiar tale, or tragedy, has been oft recounted in all its pathetic details, of how Timūr, like the Assyrian, came down like a wolf on the fold, and devastated the Punjab up to Delhi, passing through Attock, Multan, Dipālpur, Bhatnir, Sirsuti, leaving anarchy, famine, and pestilence behind him.' He captured so many slaves *en route* that he did not know what to do with them.

'From the time of entering Hindustan up to the present,' Timūr records in his autobiography (*Malfusat-i-Timūri*), 'we had taken more than 100,000 infidels and Hindus prisoners, and they were all now in my camp.....I asked my Amirs' advice, and they said that on the great day of battle these 100,000 prisoners could not be left with the baggage, and that *it would be entirely opposed to the rules of war to set them free*. In fact no other course remained but to make them all food for the sword.....When this order reached the warriors of Islam, they drew their swords and put their prisoners to death.'

The invader had met with hardly any opposition until he came to the Jamuna. Here 'the soldiers of India fought bravely for their lives, but the frail insect,' writes the author of the *Zafarnāma*, 'cannot contend against the raging wind, nor the feeble deer against the fierce lion; so they were forced to flee.' (17th Dec. 1398.)

The same writer, Yazdi, records with a smack of savage relish, regarding the sack of Delhi, 'It was the divine pleasure to ruin the city and punish its people.....Bold as the striving Hindus were, the officers in charge kept the gates shut and allowed no more troops to enter; but there were some 15,000 men already in, busy all that Friday night in pillaging, and burning the houses, and in the morning the soldiers outside broke in and added to the tumult. The whole place was sacked, and several palaces in Jahānpanah and Siri destroyed.....Towers were built high with the heads of the Hindus and their bodies were left to beasts and birds of prey.....Such inhabitants as escaped death were made prisoners. *Several thousand craftsmen were brought out and distributed by Timur among the princes and officers; the stone-masons*

were reserved to build for the conqueror a great mosque at his capital, *Sāmar-kand*.'

After having the *Khutbah* read in his name at the capital, 'as an assurance of safety and protection,' Timūr marched to Meerut and Hardwār, and then left the country (March 1399), *via* Nagarkot and Jammu, dispatching thousands of infidels 'to the fires of hell' and seizing plunder 'which is as lawful to Muslims as their mothers' milk.'

For nearly seven years after this 'Scourge of God' had vanished beyond the Indian horizon (1399-1405 A.D.) the capital was in the hands of the *Vezir*, Ikbāl Khān. Nasrat Shāh was driven out and Mahmūd set up a separate Court at Kanauj. But Ikbāl was slain in battle by Khizr Khān, the viceroy of Multan, towards the close of 1405 A.D. This enabled Mahmūd Tughlak to return to his old capital, where he died in 1412 A.D. With him closed the dynasty of Ghiyās-ud-dīn, after ninety-six years' rule at Delhi.

#### *Saiyids and Lodis:*

For two years Delhi was without a royal master. Such Government as existed was conducted by the Afghan *Amir*, Daulat Khān Lodi, who did not assume the insignia of kingship. In 1414 A.D. Khizr Khān founded the new dynasty of the so-called Saiyids, i.e. descendants of the Prophet. Even he styled himself no more than the 'noble Tartar', Timūr's deputy, although, according to Thomas, he struck coins in the name of his predecessors. The history of Khizr Khān and his three successors (Mubārak, Muhammad and Ālam) covered a period of thirty-seven years (1414-51 A.D.). How small and powerless the Kingdom of Delhi had become by then, as Lane-Poole points out, will be realised from the fact that almost yearly campaigns were needed to extort the annual tribute from the Hindu Rāja of Katehar (Rohilkand) in the north-east of Delhi, from Mewāt in the south, and Etāwah in the Doab. There were frequent rebellions at Sirhind and Jalandhar, headed by Jasrath the Khokār chief of Murree, as well as at Koil (Aligarh), Badāun, Etāwah, Rupar (Simla) etc., fomented by the Timūrid governor at Kabul, and by the rulers of Mālwa and Jaunpur. The last of the line of Khizr Khān, Ālam or Alā-ud-dīn, retired to Badāun where he lived in peace for several years, yielding authority to Bahlol Khān Lodi, the first really *Pathān* King of Delhi (1451-88 A.D.). The Lodis ruled for the next seventy-five years down to Bābur's famous victory in 1526 A.D. They counted only three rulers, -Bahlol, Sikander, and Ibrāhīm, but, although the insolence

of the last of them shattered the Kingdom, they were more successful than their predecessors, the Saiyids, in recovering the prestige if not the dominions of Delhi.

As stated before, Khizr Khān Saiyid had seized power by overthrowing Daulat Khān Lodi. Though Khizr Khān appears to have been a popular ruler, his worthless son Mubārak was done to death by one of his own ministers, Sarwar. The anarchy of the period is well described in the pages of the contemporary chronicle, *Tarikh-i-Mubārak Shāhi*, of Yahya bin Ahmad. Sarwar himself met a similar fate at the hands of his rivals when he was about to repeat his crime on his second master, Sultan Muhammad. Kamal-ul-mulk, the next minister, who is described as "a man well-versed in the duties of government," tried to rehabilitate the administration, but the forces of disruption proved too strong for him: Gwalior ceased to pay tribute; Ibrāhim Sharqi of Jaunpur seized several *Parganas* belonging to Delhi; Mahmūd Khalji of Mālwa advanced towards the capital, though he had to withdraw on account of a threatened invasion from Ahmed Shāh of Gujarat into his own province. No wonder 'the business of the state,' as one of the chroniclers tells us, 'day by day fell into greater confusion, and affairs came to such a pass that there were *amirs*, at twenty *kos* from Delhi, who shook off their allegiance and began to prepare themselves for resistance.' It was under such circumstances that Bahlol Lodi, the ambitious Afghan governor of Lahore and Sirhind, seized power from Sultan Muhammad's weaker successor, Alā-ud-dīn Ālam Shāh, who, as stated already, not unwillingly retired to Badāun to live out a lotus-eater's life until his death in 1478 A.D.

### *Lodi Achievements and Failures:*

When Bahlol ascended the throne in 1451 A.D. the Delhi Empire had been already shorn of Bengal and Jaunpur in the east, and Sind, Gujarat, Mālwa and the Deccan in the south. All that was left to the Lodi Sultan was, therefore, the Punjab from Lahore to Dipālpur in the north, and Sirhind to Hānsi, Hisar, Pānipat and Delhi in the south. Beyond this, Ahmed Khān Mewāti held territory up to within fifteen miles of the capital; Sāmbhal to the very suburbs of Delhi was under Daryā Khān Lodi; the Doab was shared between several virtually independent Hindu and Muslim chiefs. But Bahlol acted with vigour, and before his death, in 1488 A.D., succeeded in subduing Mewar, Sind, most of the Doab, and the Sharqi kingdom of Jaunpur. He had the greatest trouble with the last named

province. Under its three successive rulers,—Mahmūd Shāh, Muhammad, and Husain Khān, frequent attempts were made by the Sharqis to overthrow Bahlol at Delhi, as they considered themselves better entitled to his dominion, since Mahmūd Shāh Sharqi was the late Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Ālam Shāh's son-in-law. Throughout Bahlol's long reign of thirty-seven years (1451-88 A.D.) war between Delhi and Jaunpur continued. Bahlol finally triumphed and placed his eldest son, Bārbak Shāh, as viceroy at Jaunpur, before his own death at Jalāli in 1488 A.D. Bahlol's most predominant trait was his simplicity, assumed or real. The *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* records: 'In social meetings he never sat on the throne, and would not allow his nobles to stand; and even during public audiences he did not occupy the throne, but seated himself upon a carpet...He maintained a brotherly intercourse with all his chiefs and soldiers. If any one was ill, he would himself go and attend on him.' He was succeeded by his third son, Nizām Khān, under the title of Sikander Shāh.

The new Sultan was the son of a Hindu goldsmith woman, and, although he proved to be the greatest of the Lodi kings, like Fīrūz Tughlak (another prince born of a Hindu mother) he was a hater of the Hindus. The kingdom was extended by him so as to include Jaunpur and Bihar in the east, and Dholpur, Nagaur and Mālwa in the south. The Punjab was quieter than under his predecessor, and even the turbulent Afghan fief-holders, who had been conciliated by the shrewd Bahlol by behaving towards them as their *primus inter pares*, were adroitly governed. The history of the campaigns of Sikander need not detain us: Bārbak in Jaunpur, being unable to govern the unruly chieftains, was replaced by an imperial governor; after a skirmish with Alā-ud-dīn Husain Shāh of Bengal, peace was made by which Bihar was annexed to Delhi. Gwalior was attempted more than once, in the fashion of Aurangzeb in the Deccan, but it was not reduced until the next reign; its ruler Mān Singh proved too strong for Sikander.

Bigotry was Sultan Sikander Lodi's arch-weakness, as it was that of Fīrūz Tughlak and Aurangzeb. The desecration and destruction of Hindu temples (e.g. Mathura, Dholpur, Nagaur), whenever he could lay hands on them, was the routine in his campaigns. He prohibited the Hindus from bathing at the sacred *ghāts* on the Jamuna, and even banned barbers from shaving them. "A Brāhman of Bengal had aroused the indignation of orthodox Muslims by publicly maintaining that Islam and Hinduism were both true religions, and were but

SHARMA : *The Crescent in India*



Mān Singh's Castle : Gwalior





different roads by which God might be approached. The governor of Bihar was directed to send the offender to Court, where Sikandar asked the jurists whether it was permissible thus to preach. They decided that, since the Brāhman had admitted the truth of Islam, he should be invited to embrace it, with death as the alternative. The decision commended itself to Sikandar, and the penalty was exacted from the Brāhman, who refused to change his faith."

### *Last of the Great Sultans:*

Apart from his fanaticism Sikander was a good and capable ruler. He was the first to make use of Agra as a sub-capital, and to place the administration of the trans-Gangetic province of Katehar (Rohilkand) on an entirely satisfactory footing. He centralised the administration to a considerable extent, and not merely kept in constant touch with his provincial governors, but even directly controlled the retainers of the fief-holders. His *firmāns* were frequently read out to the populace in all parts of his dominions, to keep up their sense of awe and majesty. We learn from the *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* that 'The Sultan daily received an account of the prices of all things and an account of what had happened in the different districts of the Empire. If he perceived the slightest appearance of anything wrong, he caused instant enquiries to be made about it.' Audit and inspection of accounts were very strictly carried out without respect to persons, and the interests of the poor and traders were always safeguarded; corn duties were abolished and agriculture was encouraged. "Every year the Sultan ordered a list of the poor and the indigent to be drawn up and gave them six months' provision according to their need. On certain days such as the *Id*, *Ashura*, and the anniversary of the Prophet's death prisoners were released unless they were convicted of embezzlement of public funds or misappropriation of other people's money. No one was arbitrarily deprived of his jagir, and an established custom was never abrogated." Indeed the last named quality was Sikander's most confirmed trait. As the author of the *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* puts it:

'Every business had its appointed time and a custom once fixed was never changed. When the Sultan had once allowed a particular meat or drink he never altered it. A man of note came from Jaunpur to visit him in the hot weather and was given six jars of *sherbet* with his food on account of the heat and thirst; but when he came again in winter he still had six jars of *sherbet* to drink. The Sultan always behaved to the nobles and great men in exactly the same way after many years as he did on the first day.'

A great earth-quake took place in this reign (6 July 1505). 'It was in fact so terrible,' writes the chronicler, 'that mountains were overturned, and lofty edifices dashed to the ground: the living thought the Day of Judgment was come; and the dead, the Day of Resurrection.' Coming events did cast their shadows in advance in these terrible portents. They fulfilled themselves within ten years of Sikander Lodi's death in 1517 A.D. His successor, Ibrāhim, was to fall before the biggest political upheaval experienced since Muhammad Ghūri established Muslim dominion in this country. We shall revert to this in proper time. Meanwhile, we must rapidly sketch the history of the other provincial dynasties, from the fall of the Tughlaks to the rise of the Mughals, i.e. from 1388 to 1526 A.D.

(2) *Sind*: The story of Sind is soon told. We have already referred to its reconquest by Firūz Tughlak. Jām Babaniya lived at Delhi as a loyal courtier while his brother continued in charge of that province. The Sumrahs having reasserted their independence, as we have noted above, Bahlol Lodi subdued them once again. Multan had similarly been lost to Delhi during the anarchical period which followed the death of Firūz; Baluchis called the Langāhs had established a new dynasty there (1451 A.D.). These were not subdued either under Sikander or under Ibrāhim. They were overthrown, like the Summas who had superseded the Sumrahs in Sind, by the Arghuns of Kandahar. When Bābur laid siege to the last named province, its ruler Shāh Beg Arghun sought refuge in Sind, where he succeeded in establishing himself (c. 1522 A.D.). The Mughals found Sind and Multan torn with dissensions between the Arghuns and the Langāhs and had no difficulty in annexing the two provinces to the Empire of Delhi.

(3) *Gujarat*: The rich province of Gujarat including Kathiawar, Baroda, and six Districts of the Bombay Presidency (Ahmedābad, Khaira, Panch Mahals, Broach, Surat and part of Thāṇa) had always been coveted by the Muslims, especially since its wealth was advertised by the famous loot of Somnāth by Mahmūd Ghazni in 1125 A.D. It was, however, not annexed to Delhi until 1297 A.D. under Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, though raided several times earlier. Another century passed before the province became an independent Muslim kingdom. Zafar Khān, who was governor since 1391 A.D., shook off his allegiance to the Sultan of Delhi in 1401 A.D. and created his son Tātār Khān Sultan of Gujarat under the title of Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad Shāh. Like the kingdoms of medieval Hindu India, whose history we surveyed in the first chapter, the annals of Gujarat under its new

Muslim dynasty are full of wars with all its neighbouring states. We have space only for a few outstanding features and personalities.

Nāsir-ud-dīn imprisoned his father, but the latter got his son poisoned and ascended the throne as Sultan Muzāffar Shāh, only to be also poisoned in turn by his grandson Ahmed Shāh who ruled from 1411 to 1441 A.D. He was followed eighteen years later (1459 A.D.) by the greatest ruler of the dynasty, Mahmūd Bégarha, who reigned till 1511 A.D. His successors were Muzāffar II and Bahādur Shāh, about whom more later. The only incident we need refer to in the relations between Gujarat and the rulers of Delhi, after Firūz Tughlak's entree into the province during his campaign against Thatta (1362-3 A.D.), is the flight of Sultan Mahmūd Tughlak who sought refuge in vain with his governor of Gujarat, during Timūr's invasion (1399 A.D.). Mahmūd had consequently to turn to Mālwa for much needed shelter.

Muzāffar Shāh of Gujarat, who had himself ascended the throne by poisoning his own son, waged war on Hushāng Shāh of Mālwa for a similar crime against his father Dilāwar Khān Ghūri (1406 A.D.). Hushāng was deprived of his throne and taken prisoner, but later reinstated at Dhār. Provoked once again by the ungrateful Hushāng, Ahmed Shāh, Muzāffar's successor in Gujarat, invaded Mālwa and inflicted a great defeat on him. The new Sultan of Gujarat was a great warrior as well as administrator. "Throughout his reign he never suffered a defeat, and his armies invariably prevailed over those of the Sultanate of Mālwa, the chiefs of Asīrgarh (Khāndesh), Rajputāna and other neighbouring countries." Like his friend Sultan Firūz Bahmani he was also a zealous enemy of the Hindus whose temples he destroyed. He built the noble city of Ahmedābad about which a contemporary historian wrote: 'Travellers are agreed that they have found no city in the whole earth so beautiful, charming, and splendid.'

But, as stated before, Sultan Mahmūd Bégarha who came to the throne at the age of thirteen and ruled for fifty-two years (1459-1511 A.D.) was by far the most eminent ruler of this dynasty. He is said to have dispensed with a Protector or Regent from the very beginning. Remarkable tales about his personal peculiarities, such as consuming a *maund* of food daily, and his body being so saturated with poison that flies settling on it would drop down dead, etc., were made current by the Italian traveller Ludovico di Varthema.

The prince of Cambay's daily food  
Is ass, and basilisk, and toad.

He made himself master of the two strong fortresses (hence *Bégarha*) of Champaner and Junāgarh, overran Cutch, and gained victories over Ahmednagar, etc. His reign was also memorable for the first conflicts between the Cross and the Crescent in India. He joined the Ottoman Sultan of Turkey in trying to expel the Portuguese from the Indian waters. Since Vasco da Gama discovered the Malabar coast in 1498 A.D. Portuguese pirates had always menaced Indian shipping. A great naval engagement was fought with them, near the island of Diu, off the Kathiawar coast, in 1508 A.D., by the combined fleets of Gujarat and Turkey. The Christians were defeated for the first time in Indian history. De Almeida's son was killed in the fight which lasted two days. His ship was surrounded on every side. His leg was broken by a cannon-ball at the commencement of the action; nevertheless he had himself placed on a chair at the foot of the mainmast, and gave his orders as coolly as ever. Shortly afterwards another cannon-ball struck him in the breast, and the young hero, who was not yet twenty-one, expired, in the words of Camoens, without knowing what the word surrender meant." Next year his death was avenged by his father (2nd February 1509) and a year later Mahmūd surrendered Diu to Albuquerque the conqueror of Goa. A Portuguese factory, symbol of a new power, appeared in the island in 1513 A.D.

Nevertheless Mahmūd Bégarha, in the words of the Muslim chronicler,

'Added glory and lustre to the kingdom of Gujarat, and was the best of Gujarat kings, including all who preceded and all who succeeded him; and whether for abounding justice and generosity, for success in religious war, and for the diffusion of the laws of Islam and of Musalmans; for soundness of judgment, alike in boyhood, in manhood, and in old age; for power, for valour, and victory he was a pattern of excellence.'

(4) *Mālwa*: The history of Mālwa is closely interwoven with that of Gujarat, Khāndesh, Mewar and the Deccan, with all of whom, by its very situation, it was involved. It was successively ruled by two Muslim dynasties: the Ghūri since 1401 A.D., and the Khaljī from 1436 A.D. to its absorption within Gujarat in 1531 A.D. Its capital was the ancient Hindu city of Dhār until Hushāng the parricide, mentioned already, shifted it to Māndu where he erected several magnificent edifices. The fortified city, built on a commanding eminence, with its nearly 25 miles of protective wall, though in ruins, is still noted for its splendid Jāmi Masjid, the Hindola Mahāl, the Jahāz Mahāl, the tomb of Hushāng himself, and the palaces of the

romantic Baz Bahādur and Rūpmati, and other remarkable edifices of sandstone and marble. Hushāng's worthless son, Mahmūd, was the third and last of the Ghūri dynasty of Mālwa. Being poisoned in 1436 A.D. the throne was seized by Mahmūd Khān Khalji, who ruled for thirty-three years (1436-69 A.D.) most of which he spent fighting against internal and external enemies and rivals. 'Scarcely a year passed that he did not take the field, so that his tent became his home, and his resting place the field of battle.' But we also learn that Sultan Mahmūd was polite, brave, just, and learned; and during his reign his subjects, Muhammadans as well as Hindus, were happy and maintained a friendly intercourse with each other...His leisure hours were devoted to hearing the histories and memoirs of courts of different kings of the earth read.'

Two of Mahmūds various ventures are worthy of record: (1) In 1440 A.D. his ambition led him to march towards Delhi with a view to proclaim himself king in place of the usurper Bahlol Lodi; but the advance of the latter to meet him, as well as troubles nearer home, promptly brought him back to Mālwa. (2) Owing to Rāṇa Kumbha of Mewar's support to the Ghūris, whom Mahmūd had overthrown in Mālwa, and the Rāṇa's relations with the Rajput chiefs within the borders of his dominions, he had a tough fight with Kumbha. In 1455 A.D. he recovered Ajmer from the Rāṇa, captured Bundi, and extorted heavy indemnity from the Rajputs. To commemorate his successes he erected a great Tower of Victory at Māndu such as Rāṇa Kumbha had already raised at Chitor. The latter has remained, but of the former no trace is found. Mahmūd succeeded in considerably enlarging his kingdom, though he failed to conquer Delhi, Gujarat, Chitor and the Deccan, all of which he had attempted to take.

The history of his successors is worth no more than a bare summary. The next ruler, Mahmūd's ease-loving son Ghiyās-ud-dīn, was content to loll in his *harem* with 15,000 women, until he was poisoned by one of his sons, who ascended the throne as Sultan Nāsir-ud-dīn (1500 A.D.). The new Sultan was as tyrannical as he had been unscrupulous and was deservedly challenged by a rebellious son, supported by a large number of his oppressed subjects. Nāsir-ud-dīn died in the midst of this turmoil in 1511 A.D. (the year in which his greater contemporary Mahmūd Bégarha also died). Under his successor, Mahmūd II, Mālwa rapidly declined. His first minister, who was a Hindu, was murdered by his Muslim nobles;

his second, Muhāfiz Khān, governor of Māndu, proved a tyrannical dictator. Rebellions broke out everywhere, and soon Mālwa had three Sultans challenging each other's claims: Mahmūd II at Ujjain, Muhammad II at Māndu, and Hushāng II at Sihor. Ultimately, Mahmūd II succeeded in ousting the other two, though at the cost of having to submit to the dictatorship of his Rajput supporters under the leadership of Medini Rāi of Chānderi. He made one desperate effort to extricate himself, with the help of Muzāffar II of Gujarat, but this only brought on him the greater might of Rāṇa Sangrāma Simha, Medini Rāi's patron. Finally, outliving his great Rajput rivals, Mahmūd fell before Bahādur Shāh of Gujarat in 1531 A.D. When the latter challenged him, so runs the ignominious tale, Mahmūd retired into his seraglio deciding to end his days in pleasure. Bahādur captured Māndu, annexed Mālwa, and sent Mahmūd and his sons to Champaner; but before reaching that place, being attacked by some tribes from the hills, fearing a rescue, they were put to death by their escort.

(5) *Jaunpur*: The foundation of the city of Jaunpur by Firūz Tughlak, during his second Bengal campaign (1359-60 A.D.), has already been referred to. This new city on the Gumti, opposite Zafarābad, was destined to rise rapidly to a pre-eminence eclipsing even Delhi for a short time. It owed its greatness to two of its rulers, Khwāja Jahān and Ibrāhim Shāh. The former, a eunuch, Sarvar by name, was originally governor of the provinces to the east of Delhi under the later Tughlaks (1394 A.D.). He managed his charge most efficiently and gained from Mahmūd Tughlak the title of Lord of the East (*Malik-ūs-Sharq*). After the shock of Timūr's invasion, Khwāja Jahān's adopted son, a descendant of a slave of Firūz Tughlak, assumed the title of Mubārak Shāh Sharqi in 1399 A.D. His successor, Ibrāhim, was the greatest King of the Sharqi dynasty and ruled for thirty-five years (1402-36 A.D.). During his reign Delhi was all but completely eclipsed by Jaunpur which earned for itself the title of *Shirāz-i-Hind*. After him three inconsequential successors followed,—Mahmūd, Muhammad and Husain, under the last of whom the struggle with Delhi ended with the annexation of Jaunpur in 1476 A.D. by Bahlol Lodi. The sequel to this has already been told. Bahlol left Jaunpur in the charge of his eldest son Bārbak. Sikander continued his brother in the same office until he was found too incompetent to manage it. This experiment of appointing a brother in rival charge at Jaunpur was for the

second and last time repeated in the case of Jalāl Khān by the nobles, soon after Ibrāhīm's accession. It ended in Prince Jalāl's revolt, fratricidal war, and finally execution of the last independent ruler of Jaunpur by the last Sultan of Delhi before Bābur.

Under its virtual founder, Khwāja Jahān, the Sharqi Kingdom extended from Kanauj in the west to Bihar in the east, comprising the fiefs of Kanauj, Kara, Oudh, Sandila, Dalamau, Bahraich, Bihar and Tirhut. During the period of its ascendancy Jaunpur carried on wars with Delhi, Bengal, Orissa and Mālwa. Though it did not succeed in annexation in any of these directions, two important successes were gained in converting the Hindu Rājas of Jājnagar and Gwalior into tributaries. Kālpi at one time was disputed by Delhi, Jaunpur, and Mālwa, but was finally annexed by the last named power (1435 A.D.). Even as Ibrāhīm was the greatest ruler of Jaunpur, Husain was the most perplexing and disappointing. "He was a man of ideas, with wide opportunities and commensurate resources, ever on the point of realising some great scheme of aggrandisement, and ever missing his opportunity through carelessness folly, and perhaps physical cowardice."

The greatest and most enduring achievement of 'the Kings of the East' was architecture. In this respect, according to Lane-Poole, the Sharqis "stand supreme in the period before the Moghul empire." Though much was destroyed by Bahlol Lodi, the beautiful Atala Devi Mosque and a few others still survive to bear witness to the splendour that was Jaunpur. The great mosque built in 1408 was Ibrāhīm Sharqi's most splendid monument, and is thus described by Lane-Poole :—

"Its characteristic feature, a lofty inner gateway of simple grandeur, recalling the propylon of Egyptian temples, supplied the place of a minaret, and concealed from the quadrangle the too dominating outline of the great dome which covered the house of prayer. The graceful two-storeyed colonnades, five aisles deep, round the spacious quadrangle, broken by minor domes and gateways, the fine ashlar masonry of its plain buttressed exterior, the exquisite and rich, yet never intricate, floral ornament surrounding its doors and windows and prayer-niche, its geometrical trellis-screens and panelled ceilings, are typical of a pure style of Saracenic art, with scarcely a trace of Indian influence. Even in such a land of precious stones of architecture, the Atala Masjid remains a gem of the first water."

(6) *Bengal* : Since the flight of Lakshmaṇa Sena before Ikhtiyār-ud-dīn, in 1205 A.D., Bengal was always ruled by the Muslims. After Tughril's revolt, in 1282 A.D., we noted how Balban's son, Bhugra Khān, founded a dynasty in that province, which ruled in



virtual independence of Delhi. About 1297 A.D. Eastern and Western Bengal came to be separated into two kingdoms, with Sonārgaon and Lakhnauti as their capitals. These were not united until 1352 A.D., under Ilyās Khān who had become ruler in 1340 A.D. Sikander Shāh of this family raised several stately buildings in their new capital of Pandua (1358-89 A.D.). This dynasty was, during a short interlude, superseded by a Hindu prince, Rāja Ganesh (Kans), and his son and grandson who became converts to Islam (1414 A.D.). Then followed an Abyssinian dynasty which reigned till 1493 A.D. when it was overthrown by Husain Shāh, a reputed Arab Saiyid.

Husain Shāh was a popular king and reigned over Bengal from 1493 to 1518 A.D. "His name," writes V. A. Smith, "is still familiar throughout Bengal; and no insurrection or rebellion occurred during his reign of twenty-four years. He died at Gaur (Lakhnauti), having 'enjoyed a peaceable and happy reign, beloved by his subjects, and respected by his neighbours'." The story of his successor, Nusrat Shāh will be told in a later chapter. We learn from the chronicles that he was 'a prince of gentle disposition and strong natural affections, for he not only refrained from slaying, mutilating, or imprisoning his brothers, but doubled the provision which his father had made for them.'

It will be recollected that Lakhnauti was known in Delhi as Balghākpur or 'the City of rebellion', and Bengal as 'hell crammed with good things. Though conquered, the province had never been assimilated to the Delhi Empire. After Balban, Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī had never troubled himself about Bengal. Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, indeed, restored the suzerainty of Delhi for a time, but Muhammad lost it, and Fīrūz despite his two campaigns never regained it. "Bengal, whether as a province of Delhi or as an independent Kingdom," observes Sir Wolseley Haig, "was not a homogeneous Muslim State. Great Hindu land-holders held estates which were, in fact, principalities, and their allegiance to a Muslim ruler, like his to a Sultan of Delhi, depended on the ruler's personality....The general attitude of the rulers of Bengal to their Hindu subjects was tolerant, but it is evident, from the numerical superiority in eastern Bengal of Muslims who are certainly not the descendants of dominant invaders, that from time to time waves of proselytism swept over the country."

Yet, as Smith has pointed out, "Some of the Muhammadan kings were not indifferent to the merits of Hindu literature. A Bengālī

version of the *Mahābhārata* was prepared to the order of Nusrat Shāh, who thus anticipated the similar action of Akbar. An earlier version of the same poem is believed to date from the fourteenth century, and another was composed in the time of Husain Shāh, by command of his general, Parāgal Khān. 'Frequent references are found in old Bengālī literature indicating the esteem and trust in which the Emperor Husen Sāhā was held by the Hindus.' In fact, it seems to be true that 'the patronage and favour of the Muhammadan emperors and chiefs gave the first start towards the recognition of Bengālī in the courts of the Hindu Rājās' who, under the guidance of their Brāhman teachers, were more inclined to encourage Sanskrit."

(7) *Kashmir*: Kashmir, at the other corner of North India, was safely perched on the western Himālayas and enjoyed for long immunity from Muslim conquest. As we noted in chapter one, in spite of the earlier advance of the Crescent into Hindustan, Kashmir continued to be under its Hindu rulers until 1339 A.D. In that year the first Muslim dynasty was established by Shāh Mir who assumed the title of Shams-ud-dīn. Earlier, the kingdom had been raided by Mahmūd Ghazni (1015 A.D.), as later by Timūr (1399 A.D.), but Kashmir was not annexed to the Delhi Empire until the days of Akbar (1586 A.D.). Sikander, the fifth successor after Shams-ud-dīn, (1386-1410 A.D.) was the most bigoted ruler of the dynasty, and is remembered as the Idol-breaker of Kashmir. "He freely used the sword to propagate Islam and succeeded in forcing the bulk of the population to conform outwardly to the Muslim religion." The greatest ruler of the family was Zain-ul-Ābidīn (1417-67 A.D.). He was Akbar's fore-runner in religious toleration and confined himself with strict fidelity to one wife, a rare phenomenon among Muslim rulers of that age. He prectised universal toleration, repealed the *jizyā*, allowed the Brāhman exiled by Sikander to return to their homes, permitted the building of Hindu temples, and prohibited the slaughter of kine. He himself abstained from eating flesh. "He encouraged literature, painting, and music, and caused many translations to be made of works composed in Sanskrit, Arabic, and other languages."

## II. KINGDOMS OF SOUTH INDIA

We have described above, however cursorily, the history of the seven Muslim kingdoms of North India, from the fall of the Tughlak Empire to the rise of the Mughal Empire. The only region of importance left out of our survey is Rajputāna. This is better taken

up logically with the other great Hindu Empire of Vijayanagara, as together illustrating the resistance of Hindu India to the advance of Muslim dominion. Here we shall consider the fortunes of the three Muslim kingdoms of India to the south of the Vindhya, viz., (1) Khāndesh, (2) Bahmani and its off-shoots, and (3) Madura.

(1) *Khāndesh*: The little kingdom of Khāndesh, lying between the Vindhya in the north, the Deccan plateau in the south, Gujarat in the west, and Berar in the east, has often been overlooked by students of history. But it deserves some special notice because, situated though it was between bigger and constantly warring kingdoms, it enjoyed 'a quiet prosperity' under its Fārūki kings. Conquered evidently under Alā-ud-dīn Khalji, it was in the charge of a Muslim governor, until it became independent after the death of Fīrūz Tughlak (1388 A.D.). Its first sovereign ruler was Malik Rāja Fārūki who, like his northern neighbour Dilāwar Khān of Mālwa, declared himself independent when he realised that Delhi was too impotent to reach him. Though very ambitious, he was a man of peaceful habits and tolerated the Hindus, as well as strove to make his subjects happy by encouraging agriculture and industries. He was followed, after his death in 1399 A.D., by his son Malik Nāsir who is remembered for his capture of the famous fortress of Asirgarh from its Hindu chieftain Āsā Ahir. Akbar conquered this stronghold guarding the entrance into the Deccan in 1600 A.D. Nāsir's grandson, Mubārak, was a warlike prince who extended his rule over a part of Gondwana and carried his arms further afield into Chota Nāgpur. The later rulers of Khāndesh were none worthy of notice in a brief sketch like this. Always dependent upon Gujarat, with whom they had cultivated family relations, the Fārūkis ultimately dwindled into insignificance. The province, indeed, became famous on account of the fortress of Asirgarh and the gold filigrees of Burhānpur. Its material prosperity increased under rulers like Adil Khān (1457-1503 A.D.). As Mr. Rushbrook-Williams has observed, Khāndesh affords a good example of the manner in which the amenities of life may flourish under conditions which prohibit the exercise of the art of politics. Mirān Muhammad Fārūki was ruler when Bābur invaded India.

(2) *Bahmani*: The history of this famous kingdom of the Deccan, from its foundation to its disintegration, covers about 180 years (1347-1526 A.D.). During this period, fourteen princes ruled over the territory extending from the Pen Ganga in the north, to the

Krishna in the south, and from Konkan in the west to Bhongīr (in the Nizāms Dominions) in the east. Wars were waged with all the adjoining kingdoms, like Gujarat, Mālwa, Telingana, or even Orissa, but most of all with Vijayanagara in the south. It is futile to recount all the stereotyped details of a typical Muslim kingdom with its raids, conquests, tyrannies, persecutions, domestic tragedies, occasionally relieved by administrative achievements, fostering of art and architecture, ultimately smothering effort and ambition and everything manly in effeminate luxury. We should therefore be content with a few illustrative facts characterising the annals of the Bahmani kings.

The legend, recorded by Ferishta, about the origin of the name Bahmani may be dismissed at once. Every school-boy knows the story of Hasan Gangu and his Brāhmaṇ master, out of gratitude for whom, the dynasty is alleged to have been christened Bahmani (Brāhmaṇi). The *Burhān-i-Ma'āsir* clearly states that 'in consequence of his descent the King was known as Bahman'; and the coins and inscriptions lend no support to the popular tale. Hasan, as Smith points out, "was a fierce, bigoted Muslim who would not have dubbed himself a Brāhmaṇ for any consideration." The circumstances of the establishment of the Bahmani kingdom by Hasan Kangu, in 1347 A.D., have already been described. During the anarchy that prevailed under Muhammad Tughlak, the Afghan *amirs* of the Deccan raised one Ismail Makh to the throne at Daulatābad. He voluntarily yielded sovereignty to the more capable Hasan, who assumed the title of Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh, and ruled for over ten years from 1347-58 A.D., with his capital at Kalburgi or Gulbarga. For convenience of administration he divided his kingdom into four *tarafs* or provinces, but himself toured through them to maintain unity. His successor, Muhammad Shāh I (1358-73 A.D.), was more a warrior of Islam than a capable administrator. While the internal government was carried on by his father's minister (who is said to have continued until the accession of the sixth ruler, thus living for over a hundred years), Muhammad devoted himself to the cultivation of arms. His reign was marked by that series of wars, with Telingana and Vijayanagara, which outlasted the Bahmani kingdom and endured as a legacy under its successors. The bone of contention between Vijayanagara and Bahmani was the rich Rāichūr Doab, for the possession of which, the two powers fought like France and Germany over the Rhineland. Muhammad succeeded in filching Golkonda from the Hindu ruler of Wārangal, as well as turning the

tables against Bukkarāya I of Vijayanagara for the time being. We learn from Ferishta that Muhammad Shāh, during his reign of fifteen years, killed 500,000 Hindus.

The next ruler, Mujāhid Shāh, was murdered by his uncle, within five years of his accession (1377 A.D.), and was followed in less than a year by Muhammad Shāh II, the youngest brother of his namesake. He acquired, by his fondness for poetry and philosophy, the name of the Second Aristotle, and died in 1397 A.D. The same year saw the accession and dethornement of two of his sons, Ghiyās-ud-dīn and Shams-ud-dīn, both of whom were blinded and imprisoned in succession.

Firūz Shāh, the eighth ruler of the dynasty, reigned from 1397-1422 A.D. In the estimation of Ferishta, the house of Bahman Shāh attained its greatest splendour in the days of this king. Despite a devastating famine, which raged for over a decade in the Deccan, the usual wars against Wārangal and Vijayanagara were carried on, resulting in the acquisition of the fort of Pāngal, and extension of the Bahmani conquests as far as Rājamahendri in the Godāvāri delta, on the one hand, and the killing of Prince Bukka and extortion of an indemnity of £400,000 from his father Harihara II, on the other. For the rest, Firūz Shāh Bahmani indulged his taste for building noble edifices, like those at Firūzābād on the Bhīma and Gulbarga, and his eclecticism of the *harem* which contained the choicest daughters of Eve from all countries. One of his wars with Vijayanagara is known as the War of the Goldsmith's Daughter. The Rāya of Vijayanagara having been bewitched by a goldsmith's girl at Mūdgal, in the Bahmani territory, raided the place to capture the coveted quarry. Firūz chivalrously retaliated by defeating the Rāya and forcing him to part with one of his own daughters, as well as by securing the goldsmith's girl for his son Hasan Khān.

Hasan Khān, however, had to be content with being the son-in-law of a goldsmith, for the throne was secured by his uncle Ahmad Khān, who ruled for thirteen years (1422-35 A.D.). His reign was marked by further victories over Vijayanagara and Wārangal. The territories of the former were harried and devastated, while those of the latter were conquered and annexed. The Hindu ruler of Wārangal was killed, and the kingdom was absorbed (1425 A.D.). There were also inconsequential wars in the Konkan, Gujarat, Mālwa, etc. Ahmad's campaigns were noted for the celebration of the slaughter of every 20,000 prisoners he captured during his marches,

men, women, and children, notwithstanding a compact made by Muhammad I with Vijayanagara to spare the non-combatants. Ahmad's greatest innovation was the change of his capital from Gulbarga to the more salubrious and strategical Bidar, 60 miles to the north-east.

Ahmad's son and successor, Alā-ud-din II, ruled for 22 years (1435-57 A.D.). He was much troubled by domestic strife, including the disloyalty of his own wife, Malika Jahān, and his brother, Muhammad Khān. He tried to defend himself by calling to his aid a body of foreigners, who merely plunged the kingdom in greater feuds. On one occasion the Deccani *amirs* invited their alien rivals to a feast, but only entertained them with the sword of tyranny, and the *sherbet* of destruction, so that about 1,200 Saiyids of pure lineage and nearly 1000 other foreigners from seven to seventeen years of age were put to the sword.' But Ferishta tells us,

'To every part of his dominions he [Alā-ud-din] sent censors of morals and just judges; and though he drank wine himself, he forbade it to others, as also gaming. He put chains on the necks of idle vagabonds and made them street scavengers and labourers, that they might reform and earn their livelihood, or else quit the country. If any one, of any rank, after warning and much correction, was convicted of drinking, melted lead was to be poured down his throat.'

Alā-ud-din's son, Humāyun, who ruled from 1457-61 A.D., was the Nero of the Deccan. In the words of the historian above quoted, 'Humāyun Shāh, abandoning himself to the full indulgence of his cruel propensities...caused...vicious elephants and wild beasts to be placed in the square, and cauldrons of scalding oil and boiling water for torture. Looking on from a balcony, he had his brother Hasan thrown to a ferocious tiger who tore him to pieces and devoured him. Ingenious tortures were invented by the king and inflicted on young and old of both sexes...He put the women servants of his household to death for the most trivial faults; and when any of the nobility were obliged to wait upon him, so great was their dread that they took a last leave of their families.' The death of this *Zālim* (tyrant) was commemorated by a versifier in a Persian chronogram:

On the date of his death the world was full of delight,

So 'delight of the world' gives the date of his death.

Humāyun's best legacy was his gifted minister, Khwāja Mahmūd Gāwān. The latter served under the next two rulers as well, viz., Nizām Shāh, who died within three years (1461-63A.D.), and Muhammad Shāh III (1463-82 A.D.), who had him put to death on a malicious charge of

treason which was got up by his mendacious enemies at court. The innocent minister prophetically declared, as the executioner's hatchet descended on his neck, "The death of an old man like me is of little moment to myself, but to you (Muhammad) it will prove the ruin of an empire and of your own glory."

Truth, indeed, sits on the lips of dying men, and the empire of the Bahmanis did not last long after this murder, which was both a blunder and a crime. Muhammad Shāh died in 1482 A.D. and was followed by the imbecile Mahmūd who was only twelve years old at his accession. Though he reigned till 1518 A.D., he was a worthless prince who totally neglected his government, and spent his time "with low-born favourites in vulgar debauchery." It is no wonder that under him and after him, the provincial governors declared their independence one after another. The kingdom of Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh was soon shrunk to the confines of the capital, Bidar, where four puppet Sultans were enthroned in succession by their ministers, until in 1526 A.D. the last of the Bahmani's Kaleem-ullah, sought help in vain from Bābur, and Amir Barid founded the new Barid-Shāhi of Bidar.

Before taking leave of this subject, it is necessary to recount the work of two great administrators: they were both ministers, not kings: (1) Saif-ud-dīn Ghūri, who served under the first five Bahmanis, and (2) Mahmūd Gāwān who served under the last three real rulers of the dynasty. While the kings were engrossed with their conquests and concubines, these two eminent men sustained the administration of the country, and indeed improved it.

When Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh conquered Goa, Dhābol, Karhād and Kolhāpur in the west, and Kohīr and Bhongīr in the east, he felt impatient to subdue the whole country up to Cape Comorin, and like Alā-ud-dīn Khalji, actually assumed the title of 'the Second Alexander', but the sober minister, Saif-ud-dīn, recalled him to a more practical and saner policy as the advisers of the great Khalji and Muhammad Tughlak had done before. Though the second Bahmani Sultan, Muhammad I, is credited by Sir Wolseley Haig with having been "a diligent and methodical administrator," he was too much pre-occupied with war, wine and slaughter of the Hindus, to have either time or inclination for constructive statesmanship. The administrative organisation must, therefore, be ascribed to the initiative of his Ghūri minister, Saif-ud-dīn. The same remark must hold good even about Muhammad II after whom the old minister died, at the age of 104

years (1397 A.D.). When famine raged in the Kingdom, between 1387 and 1395 A.D., a thousand bullocks belonging to the transport establishment of the court were employed incessantly in importing corn from Gujarat and Mālwa, but sold at low rates "to Muslims only." Similarly, free schools were established for Muslim orphans at Gulbarga, Bidar, Kandhar, Elichpur, Daulatābad, Chāul, Dhābol, and other cities and towns, "in which children were not only taught, but were housed and fed at public expense. Special allowances were also given to readers of the Koran, reciters of the Traditions, and the blind."

The administrative system is thus described by Sir Wolseley Haig:—

"His (Muhammad I's.) system is worthy of record, for it was imitated first in the five states which rose on the ruins of the Kingdom, and, later, by Sivāji, the founder of the Marāṭha power. He appointed eight ministers of state: (1) *vakīl-us-saltana*, or lieutenant of the Kingdom, who was the immediate subordinate of the sovereign, and held the regency when he was absent from the capital; (2) *wazīr-i-kull*, who supervised the work of all of the ministers; (3) *amīr-i-jumla*, minister of finance; (4) *wazīr-i-āshraf*, minister of foreign affairs and master of the ceremonies (5) *wazīr*, assistant minister of finance; (6) *peshwā*, who was associated with the lieutenant of the Kingdom and whose office was in later times, almost always amalgamated with his; (7) *kotwal*, chief or police and city magistrate in the capital; and (8) *sadr-i-jehan*, or chief justice and minister of religious affairs and endowments.

"The royal bodyguard consisted of 200 esquires to the king and 4000 gentlemen-troopers, divided into four reliefs, each of 50 esquires and 1000 troopers, commanded by one of the great nobles at the capital. The tour of duty of each relief was four days, and the whole force was commanded by one of the ministers, who however, performed his routine military duties by deputy."

The final reorganisation of the provinces, which were originally four as stated before, was the work of Mahmūd Gāwān, by common consent, the greatest of the Muhammadan administrators of the Deccan. Though a foreigner himself (Persian), he did not side with any of the factions in the Kingdom, which consisted in the main of the Deccanis and Habshis (Abyssinians) on the one side, and the Arabs, Persians, and Turks on the other. The tendency of the kings was on the whole to side with the foreigners in order to keep down the natives, but sometimes, as it happened in the present context, they fell a prey to the machinations of the Deccani nobles. "The natives of the Deccan," observes Sir Wolseley Haig, "were less energetic and enterprising than those of the more northern latitudes, and, being unable to compete with the hardy Arab, the intellectual Persian, and the virile Turk, were obliged to give place to them at court as well as in



camp." The feuds between them were also complicated by sectarian differences as well. The natives were all *Sunnis*, whereas among the foreigners were a large number of *Shiahs*. The conflicts thus arising were not confined to mere intrigues for place and power, but frequently found expression in pitched battles and bloody massacres. It was this intestinal strife, together with the degeneracy of the monarchs, that led to the rapid disintegration of the Bahmani Kingdom. But before its fall it attained its climax under Muhammad III and his great minister, Gāwān.

Goa, which had been taken by the Rāyas of Vijayanagara, was reconquered on the west coast, and Kanchi, the great temple city, which had never been touched by Muslim arms so far, was plundered and destroyed. The Bahmani dominions thus reached an extent never reached by former sovereigns; for the first time the Kingdom stretched from sea to sea, "its coast-line extending on the west from Bombay to Goa, and on the east from Coconada to the mouth of the Krishna." To tranquillise Telingana, Muhammad made Rājamahendri his residence for three years, and, at Mahmūd Gāwān's suggestion, made a far-reaching redistribution of the provinces. Telingana itself was divided into two: Wārangal being made the capital of the western, and Rājamahendri that of the eastern division. Berar was similarly distributed between Gāwilgarh (north) and Māhūr (south); Daulatābad into Daulatābad (east) and Junnar (west); and Gulbarga into Gulbarga (east) and Belgaum (west). The powers of the provincial governors were curtailed at the same time.

These were revolutionary changes in the eyes of those affected by them, and a conspiracy was soon hatched to destroy the author of the reorganisation. A document was forged to show that Mahmūd Gāwān was engaged in treasonable activities. The allegation was proved to Muhammad Shāh while he was in his cups, and an order for Gāwān's execution was extorted. The inebriated Sultan was thus got to murder his great minister, as he realised in his sober moments, but disillusionment came too late. This worked upon Muhammad's mind so much that he died of compunction within a year (1482 A.D.), "crying out with his last breath that Mahmūd Gāwān was slaying him." After this came the deluge.

Khwāja Mahmūd Gāwān, who had been made Khwāja Jahān, was seventy-eight years of age when he was made to pay the extreme penalty on 5 April 1481. He had faithfully served his masters during thirty-five years, and died cheerfully with the exclamation, "Praise-

be to God for the blessing of martyrdom!" on his lips. He had honestly striven to heal the disastrous feud between the Deccanis and the Foreigners, and spent all his income on charities. Though fanatical, like most of his contemporaries, towards the Hindus, he led the life of a sincere Muslim, slept on a plain mattress, ate from earthen vessels, and loved to spend his time in the midst of his 3,000 books at his Bidar residence. "No department escaped his attention; he organised the finances, improved the administration of justice, encouraged public education, and instituted a survey of village lands to make the state demand of revenue just and equitable. Corrupt practices were put down, and those who were guilty of speculation were called to account. The army was reformed; better discipline was enforced, and the prospects of the soldiers were improved." (Ishwari Prasad, *Medieval India*, p. 443.) Meadows Taylor justly observes that the murder of Gāwān was the beginning of the end; 'with him departed all the cohesion and power of the Bahmani Kingdom.'

#### *The Pentarchy:*

Under the successors of Muhammad Shāh III (1482-1526 A.D.) the Kingdom split up into a Pentarchy: (1) the Amad-Shāhi of Berar, (2) the Adil-Shāhi of Bijapur, (3) the Nizām-Shāhi of Ahmednagar, (4) the Kutb-Shāhi of Golkonda, and (5) the Barid-Shāhi of Bidar. It could not be otherwise in a Kingdom having the character we have described. Athanasius Nikitin, a Russian merchant, who travelled in the Bahmani dominions between 1470 and 1474 A.D., noted that the Sultan was 'in the power of the nobles;' there was a Persian Boyar, 'a merchant prince' who kept an army of 200,000 men; 'Melik Khān keeps 100,000; Kharat Khān, 20,000; and many are the Khāns that keep 10,000 armed men.' In the midst of such feudal barons, the Sultan, though he went out with 300,000 troops of his own, there were among them '200 elephants adorned in gilded armour, ...100 dancers, and 300 common horses in golden clothing; 100-monkeys, and 100 concubines, all foreign.' As another historian tells us, "The people following the example of their king, attended to nothing but dissipation. Revered sages pawned their very garments at the wine-cellars, and holy teachers quitting their colleges retired to taverns, and presided over the wine-flask."

The history of the greatest of the five new kingdoms named above, viz. Bijapur and Golkonda, which alone are instructive, will be told in a later chapter. Here we might merely note the chronology of their independence. Berar became independent in 1484 A.D.; Bijapur,

in 1489; Ahmednagar, in 1498; Golkonda, in 1518; and Bidar, in 1526 A.D.

(3) *Madura*: This ancient Hindu kingdom of the Pāndyas was first conquered by the Muslims, as we have seen, under Malik Kāfur in 1311 A.D. But after this, owing to happenings in the North, already described, South India had a short respite from Muslim attacks until Mubārak sent Malik Khusru, in 1319 A.D., after the death of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and his great general. During this brief interval, Ravivarman Kulashekara from Kerala invaded the Pāndya country, and carried his arms as far as Nellore on the east coast. This expedition was retaliated by the Kākatiya ruler, Pratāparudra II, who led an expedition up to the island of Srirangam in the Kaveri. Malik Khusru, during his campaign of 1319, did nothing more than plunder the district of Madura, after which he was soon recalled to Delhi. The province of Ma'bar was then placed in the charge of a Muslim governor who rebelled during the reign of Muhammad Tughlak, in 1335 A.D. It was on this occasion that Madura became an independent Sultanate, under Jalāl-ud-dīn Ahsan Shāh. Madura and Ma'bar were never recovered by Delhi after this, though they continued to be governed by the Muslims for some time. Jalāl-ud-dīn, being killed by one of his own officers, five years later, was succeeded by his murderer, who usurped the throne and assumed the title of Alā-ud-dīn Udaujī. But within a year the usurper himself was killed, like William Rufus, by an unknown arrow. His successor, Kutb-ud-dīn Firūz Shāh, was also slain, within forty days of his accession, by Ghiyās-ud-dīn Dāmaghānī who was a great persecutor of the Hindus. Ibn Battuta records how this Sultan tortured and massacred a large number of Hindu men, women and children, and, having defeated the octogenarian Vira Ballāla III, strangled and flayed him and had his skin stuffed and hung over the walls of Madura (1342 A.D.). His nephew, Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd Ghāzī, instituted a reign of terror in which he slew all his unsympathetic officers, including a son-in-law of the late Sultan whose bereaved wife he immediately married (1344 A.D.). Ibn Battuta left his court in sheer disgust. This monster of a monarch was followed by three other Sultans,—Adil Shāh, Fakhr-ud-dīn Mubārak Shāh, and Alā-ud-dīn Sikander Shāh, under the last of whom (c. 1378 A.D.) the Sultanate of Madura was finally extinguished by the growing Hindu power of Vijayanagara. Thus, ten years before the death of Firūz Tughlak, Muslim rule in Madura had come to an end.

*Hindu Political Revival :*

After this brief survey of Muslim rule in India, following the death of Firūz Tughlak (1388 A.D.), we must take a rapid review of the state of Hindu India during the same period, before the establishment of the next empire of the Crescent, viz., the Mughal Empire. This will comprise, so far as South India was concerned, principally of the history of Vijayanagara, whose foundation in 1336 A.D. we have referred to before. Of the ancient Hindu kingdoms of the south, surviving till the advent of Islam, the Yādavas, the Kākatiyas, the Hoysalas, and the Pāndyas, had fallen one after another. The Keralas alone, on the west coast, continued unconquered to the last. But before the final extinction of the Kākatiyas and the Hoysalas, their last rulers, Pratāparudra II and Vīra Ballāla III, had lit a torch that was not extinguished until after the fall of Vijayanagara in 1565 A.D. Though the exact details surrounding the creation of this great Hindu empire are shrouded in obscurity, there could be little doubt as to the circumstances of its genesis. Pratāparudra and Vīra Ballāla had fallen, not merely like heroes but also as martyrs. Indeed, as Sewell has put it, 'everything seemed but to be leading up to but one inevitable end—the ruin and devastation of the Hindu province the annihilation of their old royal houses, the destruction of their religion, their temples and their cities. All that the dwellers in the south held most dear seemed tottering to its fall.' The citadel with seven walls that was erected on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra, opposite Ānégūndi, was meant to be a bulwark against the forces of *adharma* let loose by the Mlechchas all over the land. The lesson of the fate of the little principality of Kampli in its vicinity, described earlier in connection with the rising of Bahā-ud-dīn, (1327 A.D.) had burnt into the hearts of the Hindu leaders of the south, and was never forgotten. An inscription of Mārappa, one of the five brothers whose names are associated in tradition with the foundation of Vijayanagara, declared that, evil having encompassed the earth, God 'caused Saṃgama (their father) to be born in a great royal line for the help of *Dharma*.' The five sons of Saṃgama, the most famous of whom were Harihara, Bukka and Kampana, must have therefore appeared to their generation, and after, as the reincarnations of the Pāndavas acting under the inspiration of Śrī Krishna in the person of Vidyātīrtha. The three elder brothers guarded the northern frontier from Goa in the west to Nellore in the east, while the two younger ones protected the south from the Sultanate of Madura. No better

opportunity could have been found for making the first effort to liberate their country from the hated domination of the Muslims, than during the anarchy let loose by Muhammad Tughlak. The example had, indeed, been set by the Muslim governor of Ma'bar in 1335 A.D., and the Hindus followed it up promptly by building the great fortress of Vijayanagara the very next year (1336 A.D.). In course of time it developed into the shape thus described by Abdur Razzāk, who visited Vijayanagara a century later (1443 A.D.) :—

'The city of Bijnagar,' he writes, 'is such that eye has not seen nor ear heard of any place resembling it upon the whole earth. It is so built that it has seven fortified walls, one within the other. Beyond the circuit of the outer wall there is an esplanade extending for about fifty yards, in which stones are fixed near one another to the height of a man; one half buried firmly in the earth, and the other half rises above it, so that neither foot nor horse, however bold, can advance with facility near the outer wall.....From the northern gate of the fortress to the southern is a distance of two statute *parasangs*, and the same with respect to the distance between the eastern and the western gates. Between the first, second and third walls, there are cultivated fields, gardens and houses. From the third to the seventh fortress, shops and bazars are closely crowded together. By the palace of the king there are four bazars situated opposite to one another. That which lies to the north is the imperial palace or abode of the Rai. At the head of each bazar, there is a lofty arcade and magnificent gallery, but the palace of the king is loftier than all of them. The bazars are very broad and long, so that the sellers of flowers, notwithstanding that they place high stands before their shops, are yet able to sell flowers from both sides. Sweet scented flowers are always procurable fresh in that city, and they are considered as even necessary sustenance, seeing that without them they could not exist. The tradesmen of each separate guild or craft have their shops close to one another. The jewellers sell their rubies and pearls and diamonds and emeralds openly in the bazar.'

Harihara and Bukka acted both cautiously and prudently, for neither of them assumed the insignia of royalty, although they acted quite like kings. It also shows their selflessness and the high aims which inspired them. Harihara died in 1343 A.D., and Bukka in 1379 A.D. Not until Harihara II, 1379-1404 A.D., was the title *Mahārājādhirāja* assumed; he also claimed to be 'the supporter of the four castes and orders', as well as, 'the master in establishing the ordinances prescribed by the *Vedas*' and 'publisher of the commentaries on the *Vedas*.' The second and third rulers of Vijayanagara were the contemporaries of the first eight rulers of the Bahmani dynasty. During all these years, from the accession of Alā-ud-dīn Bahman Shāh (1347 A.D.) to the death of Harihara II (1404 A.D.) the two kingdoms were frequently at war, except during the short interlude of the reign of the peace-

loving Muhammad Shāh II. This truce, as we have noticed already, was broken by the adventurous Bukka II on the one side and Firūz Bahmani (1397-1422 A.D.) on the other. The latter led no less than twenty-four expeditions, mostly against his Hindu neighbours, Telingana and Vijayanagara, who acted in unison against their common enemy, until the Kākatiya power of Wārangal was extinguished by Ahmad Shāh, the next Bahmani ruler (1422-35 A.D.). We have noted how Devarāya I's pursuit of the goldsmith's daughter, at Mūdgal, led to his having to submit to the humiliation of yielding up his own daughter to the much married monarch, Firūz Shāh.

The monotonous wars of the period need not be followed any further. Though victory often lay with the Muslims, and the Vijayanagara territory was more than once devastated by the Bahmani troops, which even plundered the outskirts of the Hindu capital, there were no annexations made to the Bahmani kingdom, except on the side of Telingana. "Deva Rāya II (1421-48 A.D.), impressed with the facts that the Islamite armies owed their success largely to being better mounted than their opponents and supported by a large body of expert archers, tried the expedient of enlisting Muhammadans in his service and equipping them in the Bahmani fashion." Though this did not bear immediate fruit, under Krishnadeva Rāya, a century later (1509-29 A.D.), the Rāichūr Doab, between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers, was conquered by Vijayanagara. The quarter century preceding this culmination was one of great turmoil in the Hindu kingdom, two successive revolutions having been effected during the period. In 1485-6 A.D. Sāluva Narasinga, the powerful chief of Chandragiri, usurped the throne. For about forty years prior to this event, as Sewell has pointed out, "the kingdom passed from one hand to the other, in the midst of much political agitation, discontent, and widespread antagonism to the representatives of the old royal family, several of whom appear to have met with violent deaths." The usurper's son was treated in like fashion by his Tuluva general, Narasa Nāyaka in 1505 A.D. This is known as the Second Usurpation. Krishnadeva Rāya, named above, was the greatest ruler of the third dynasty of Vijayanagara, if not also the most eminent of all its kings.

### *The Glory that was Vijayanagara:*

The Empire of Vijayanagara reached its zenith under this prince. It extended over the entire peninsula south of the Krishna river;

along the coast, it stretched from Salsette in the west to Cuttack in the east. Madura had been conquered from its Muslim rulers, as stated before, quite early in the history of the kingdom. The event was celebrated in very elegant Sanskrit verse by Gangā Devi the wife of its conqueror, Prince Kampana, in her *Madurāvijaya-kāvya*m. But, in the words of Dr. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, "Krishna's reign marks the grand climacteric in the development of the empire, and the successful achievement of the objects for which it was actually founded." Domingos Paes, a contemporary Portuguese visitor, describes the Rāya as

'the most feared and perfect king that could possibly be, cheerful of disposition and very merry; he is one that seeks to honour foreigners and receives them kindly, asking about all their affairs whatever their condition may be. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice.'

It is difficult to surpass the following estimate of the king by V. A. Smith: "The dark pages of the sanguinary story of the medieval kingdoms of the Deccan, whether Hindu or Muhammadan, are relieved by few names of men who claim respect on their personal merits. The figure of Krishna Rāya stands out pre-eminent. A mighty warrior, he 'was in no way less famous for his religious zeal and catholicity. He respected all sects of the Hindu religion alike, though his personal leanings were in favour of Vaishnavism... Krishna Rāya's kindness to the fallen enemy, his acts of mercy and charity towards the residents of captured cities, his great military prowess which endeared him alike to his feudatory chiefs and to his subjects, the royal reception and kindness that he invariably bestowed upon royal embassies, his imposing personal appearance, his genial look and polite conversation which distinguished a pure and dignified life, his love for literature and for religion, and his solicitude for the welfare of his people; and above all, the almost fabulous wealth that he conferred as endowments on temples and Brāhmins, mark him out indeed as the greatest of the South Indian monarchs, who sheds a lustre on the pages of history.'"

The Empire, being broad-based upon the goodwill of the people of the entire peninsula, had developed rapidly. Though the Bahmani Kingdom remained a solid block in the north, the political power of the Muslims further south was quickly extinguished. Ibn Battuta writes, "The inhabitants of Malabar generally pay tribute to the king of Honaur (North Kanara District), fearing as they do his bravery by sea. His army too consists of about 6,000 men. They are, nevertheless, a brave and warlike race. The present king is

Jamāl-ud-din Muhammad Ibn Hasan. He is one of the best of princes ; *but is himself subject to an infidel king whose name is Harib* (Harihara I). The extinction of the Madura Sultanate has been referred to before. But the Vijayanagara rulers never aimed at the suppression of Islam. They not merely enlisted large numbers of Muslim soldiers, which of course was expedient, but also tolerated the practice of their religion within their dominions. As Barbosa noticed, "The king allows such freedom that every man may come and go, and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance, and without inquiry, whether he is a Christian, Jew, Moor or Heathen. Great equity and justice is observed by all." We have the testimony of Abdur Razzāk to illustrate the hospitality of these Hindu kings towards Muslim plenipotentiaries in the fifteenth century :

'One day messengers from the king (Devarāya II, 1443 A.D.) came to summon me,' writes the Persian envoy, 'and towards the evening I went to the court, and presented five beautiful horses and two trays each containing nine pieces of damask and satin. The king was seated in great state in the forty-pillared hall, and a great crowd of Brāhmaṇs and others stood on the right and left of him. He was clothed in a robe of zaitun satin, and he had round his neck a collar composed of pure pearls of regal excellence, the value of which a jeweller would find it difficult to calculate. He was of an olive colour, of a spare body, and rather tall. He was exceedingly young..... His whole appearance was very prepossessing. On being presented to him, I bowed down my head. He received me kindly, and seated me near him, and, taking the august letter of the emperor, made it over (to the interpreters), and said, "My heart is exceedingly glad that the great king has sent an ambassador to me."

'As I was in a profuse perspiration from the excessive heat and the quantity of clothes which I had on me, the monarch took compassion on me and favoured me with a fan of Khatai which he held in his hand. They then brought a tray, and gave me two packets of betel, a purse containing 500 *panams*, and about 20 *miskals* of comphor, and, obtaining leave to depart, I returned to my lodging.

'The daily provision forwarded to me comprised two sheep, eight fowls, five *maṇs* of rice, one *maṇ* of butter, one *maṇ* of sugar, and two *varahas* of gold.....Twice a week, I was summoned to the presence towards the evening, when the king asked me several questions respecting the Khākān-i-Sa'id, and each time I received a packet of betel, a purse of *panams*, and some *miskals* of comphor.'

Abdur Razzāk further tells us that the city was 'exceedingly large and populous' and the King 'of great power and dominion.' The country was 'for the most part well-cultivated and fertile,' and 'about 300 good sea ports' belonged to it. There were more than 1000 elephants 'lofty as the hills and gigantic as demons'. The army



consisted of 11,00,000 men. 'In the whole of Hindustan,' he adds, 'there is no *Rai* more absolute than himself...The Brāhmins are held by him in higher estimation than all other men.' We might find the reason for this in the characterisation of this class by Nuniz as "honest men, given to merchandise, very acute and of much talent, very good at accounts." Paes speaks of them as the fairest men and women in the land. Though *Sati* was practised at Vijayanagara, there were women wrestlers, astrologers, and sooth-sayers; and the King, according to Nuniz, had in his service women who wrote all accounts of expenses that were incurred inside the gates. There were also women chroniclers "whose duty was to write all the affairs of the Kingdom and compare their books with those of the writers outside." Withal, prostitution in the city was so enormous that the state realised a revenue of 12,000 *pañams* out of them. This amount, according to Abdur Razzāk, went 'to pay the wages of the policemen.' The business of these men was 'to acquaint themselves with all the events and accidents that happen within the seven walls, and to recover everything that is lost,...otherwise they are fined.'

#### *In Defence of Realm and Religion:*

In the midst of wealth and luxury, such as had rarely existed in any imperial city in India till then, the kings tried to keep up their martial vigour and that of their prosperous subjects by a system of licensed duelling, which was freely indulged in by high and low, and themselves setting the example in matters of food and exercise. We learn from Nuniz that the Kings of Vijayanagara ate all things except the flesh of oxen or cows: "They eat mutton, pork, venison, partridges, hares, doves, quails, and all kinds of birds; even sparrows and rats, and cats and lizards, all of which are sold in the market of the city of Bisnaga." Bloody sacrifices, on such occasions as the *Navarātra* festival, are also described by contemporary witnesses 250 buffaloes, and 4,500 sheep were killed on the last day, their heads being struck off at a single blow each.

Krishnadeva Rāya may be taken as the very pattern of these rulers. In the words of Sewell, "He was physically strong in his best days, and kept his strength up to the highest pitch by hard bodily exercise. He rose early and developed all his muscles by the use of the Indian clubs and the use of the sword; he was a fine rider, and was blessed with a noble presence which favourably impressed all who came in contact with him. He commanded his enormous armies in person, was able, brave and statesmanlike, and was withal a

man of much gentleness and generosity of character. He was beloved by all and respected by all."

The regular army of Vijayanagara, according to Nuniz, consisted of 50,000 infantry, 20,000 spearmen and shield-bearers, 3,000 men to look after the elephants, 1,600 grooms, 300 horse-trainers, 2,000 artificers, like blacksmiths, masons, carpenters, washermen, etc.; whereas, Paes places it at 703,000 foot, 32,600 horse, and 551 elephants, besides camp-followers, in 1520 A.D. This enormous force was felt necessary for the defence of the realm and religion against the aggressive Turushkas.

*Rājasthān also Mobilises :*

Though Rājasthān had nothing like Vijayanagara to boast of in material wealth and grandeur, during the same period, its preparations for meeting the Muslims in the field of battle were not less formidable in the north. Rāṇa Sangrāma Simha or Rāṇa Sanga who valiantly fought against Bābur, in 1527 A.D. at Kanua, was an exact contemporary of the more successful Krishnadeva Rāya of Vijayanagara. If the Hindu political revival of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is to be fully appreciated, the histories of Rājasthān and Vijayanagara must be read together. The Rajputs were the first to bear the brunt of the Muslim attacks in India. We have seen how their heroic efforts failed under the leadership of the Gurjara-Pratihāras in the earlier, and of Jayapāla and Prithvirāja in the later stages of the first Muslim advance. The Rajput forces were then scattered, and Chitor itself, the Mecca of their chivalry, fell before the might of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, the builder of the first Empire of the Crescent in India. But the lion of the desert could not be slain by the scimitar so long as a single scion of the Sissodias breathed. Their eponymous ancestor Bāppa Rāwal, whom Mr. C. V. Vaidya has styled "the Charles Martel of India," for staying the Arab advance in the eighth century (c. 730 A.D.), had set up a tradition which was all but extinguished only with the fall of Chitor at the hands of Akbar in 1568 A.D., within three years of the destruction of Vijayanagara by the Deccani Muslims (1565 A.D.). The erection of the Tower of Victory, previously mentioned, by Rāṇa Kumbha, about the middle of the fifteenth century, may be taken as an outstanding landmark in the revival of Rājasthān. Its culmination was reached under Rāṇa Sanga who ascended the throne of Mewar in 1509 A.D., the year of Krishnadeva Rāya's accession, also, at Vijayanagara. The great Rāṇa was defeated by

Bābur (1527 A.D.) only two years before the death of the great Rāya (1529 A.D.). It is interesting to note that the Mughal invader recognised the greatness of both his eminent Hindu contemporaries before he encountered the forces of Hindu India on the field of Kanua. 'The most powerful of the pagan princes,' he wrote in his *Memoirs*, 'in point of territory and army, is the Rāja of Bijanagar... Another is Rāṇa Sanka, who has attained his present high eminence only in these later times by his own valour and his sword'. He further noted that 'His original principality was Chitor; during the confusion that prevailed among the princes of the Kingdom of Māndu, he seized a number of provinces which had depended on Māndu, such as Rantpur (Rantambhor), Sārangpur, Bhilsan and Chānderi'. There were also 'a number of other Rāis and Rājas on the borders and within the territory of Hindustan, many of whom', says Bābur, 'on account of their remoteness, or the difficulties of access into their country, have never submitted to the Musalman Kings'. But it is significant of the Hindu resurgence under the leadership of Mewar that many of them rallied to the cause of their realm and religion, as they did in the south under the Rāyas of Vijayanagara. Rāṇa Sanga did not fail to mobilise all his resources for the inevitable final contest: "Eighty thousand horses, seven Rājas of the highest rank, nine Raos, and one hundred and four chieftains bearing the titles of Rawul and Rawut, with five hundred war elephants, followed him into the field. The Princes of Marwar and Amber did him homage, and the Raos of Gwalior, Ajmer, Sikri, Raisen, Kalpek, Chanderi, Bundi, Gagraon, Rampura, and Abu, served him as tributaries or held of him in fief. His personal figure corresponded with his deeds: He exhibited at his death but the fragment of a warrior; one eye was lost in the broil with his brother, an arm in an action with the Lodi King of Delhi, and he was a cripple owing to a limb being broken with a cannon-ball in another, while he counted eighty wounds from the sword or the lance on various parts of his body."

If we apply the above description to Hindu India instead of Rāṇa Sanga, the picture will be equally truthful—heroic but tattered.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

1450-1526 Lodis rule at Delhi.

1453 Constantinople conquered by Turks.

1459-1511 Mahmūd Bēgarha king of Gujarat.

A.D.

- 1463-81 Mahmūd Gāwān minister of Bahmani kings; decline follows his murder.
- 1484 Berar independent.
- 1486 Sāluva Narasinga; First Usurpation at Vijayanagara. Diaz rounded cape of Good Hope.
- 1489 Bijapur independent.
- 1492 Columbus discovered America.
- 1498 Vasco da Gama at Calicut.
- 1505 Tuluva Narasa Nāyaka; Second Usurpation at Vijayanagara. Earthquake in Hindustan and Persia.
- 1507 First naval fight between Gujarat and the Portuguese.
- 1509 Krishnadeva Rāya's accession at Vijayanagara; Rāṇa Sanga's at Chitor. Henry VIII's, in England.
- 1510 Ismail Adilshāh at Bijapur; Goa taken by the Portuguese.
- 1514 Bābur king of Kabul.
- 1518 Golkonda independent.
- 1519 Bābur's first Indian expedition.
- 1520-66 Suleiman the Magnificent rules from Bagdad to Hungary; climax of Vijayanagara Empire.
- 1522 Domingos Paes Portuguese visitor at Vijayanagara.
- 1526 Bābur's Victory at Pānipat; Bidar became independent.
- 1535 Nuniz Portuguese visitor at Vijayanagara.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CHARACTER OF CRESCENTDOM IN INDIA

The history of Muslim Rule in India naturally divides itself into two sections: (1) the period of conquest and administrative experiment, and (2) the period of imperial organisation and cultural creativeness. There is in this history a definite growth and fulfilment which has been lost sight of or ignored by Western writers. Lane-Poole, despite his broad sympathies, sadly missed his mark when he saw in our medieval history "more a chronicle of kings and courts and conquests than of organic or national growth." Few other countries have had the unique good fortune of the organic and national growth that England has enjoyed through successive centuries of "freedom broadening from precedent to precedent." But such comparisons are rather misleading, and Lane-Poole was not quite justified in observing that, during the Medieval Age in India, "The vast mass of the people enjoy the doubtful happiness of having no history, *since they show no development*; apparently they are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Nor was there any such marked change *even in the principles and methods of government* as might be expected from the diversity of successive rulers of various races." People in the east may not change as often or as fast or in the same manner as those in the west, but a closer reading of our history will show that, even apparently, we are not the same "yesterday, today and forever." Not only did medieval India differ from ancient as she does from modern, but she was no more stagnant than Europe during the same age. We shall notice in the present chapter some at least of the social, political and cultural changes that resulted from the advent of the Crescent in this country. Lane-Poole is more correct when he observes that "History is always continuous; there can be no 'fresh start'; and each new period carries on much of what preceded it." In other words, each age is the parent of its successor: the early Muslim period (1206-1526 A.D.) was the seed-time of Mughal India (1526-1759 A.D.). The work which was begun by the former was completed by the

latter. The Mughal Empire was the culmination of the Khalji and Tughlak Empires. A review of the salient features of the history we have traced in the previous six chapters will, therefore, serve as an introduction to the doings of the Mughals that we shall describe later in this study. For the sake of convenience, we might divide this review into (A) Résumé of Political Achievement, and (B) Cultural Rapprochement.

#### A. RÉSUMÉ OF POLITICAL ACHIEVEMENT

##### *The Trail of Conquest:*

We have seen how Muslim conquests in India commenced with the subjugation of Sind by the Arabs in 712 A.D. Multan was annexed in the following year. For a little over three centuries after this, India was free from fresh Muslim incursions. Then Mahmūd Ghazni, a Turk, began his famous plundering raids (1001-26 A.D.), but the only annexation he effected was the Punjab. Here his descendants exercised sovereignty during the next 160 years (1026-1186 A.D.). But the real and systematic conquest of Hindustan did not begin until a few years later. Muhammad Ghūri, having overthrown the Ghaznavids at home, advanced upon Lahore and took the last descendants of the Idol-breaker captive in 1186 A.D. The historic defeat of Prithvirāja Chauhān, on the field of Tarāin, followed six years afterwards (1192 A.D.); while Aibak and Bakhtiyār-ud-dīn carried Muslim arms further east, reaching Lakhnauti within ten years of the fall of Prithvirāja (1202 A.D.). Kanauj and Benares had fallen in 1193 A.D. Gwalior, Ajmer and Anhilwārā perhaps formed the southern-most limits at this stage of the advance of the Crescent. South of Bihar and Bengal was the impenetrable jungle of Gondwana. Muhammad Ghūri was an Afghan, or Turk long domiciled in Afghanistan; his followers too were either Afghans or Turks. But his successors who established themselves at Delhi were Turkish slaves or their descendants.

Till the death of Muhammad Ghūri, in 1206 A.D., the Muslim conquerors of Hindustan acknowledged a foreign suzerain: the Caliph of Bagdad, up to 871 A.D., in the case of the Arabs of Sind; and the King of Ghazni, except during the short interval of the Ghaznavids' retirement in Lahore, in the case of the Turks. After 1206 A.D., when Aibak established the 'Slave dynasty' at Delhi, the Muslim masters of Hindustan owned no sovereign outside India, though some of the Sultans paid ceremonious homage to the impotent Caliphs. Khizr Khān, the founder of the Saiyid dynasty, was the

only one who is supposed to have styled himself Timūr's representative ; but even he struck coins in the name of the Tughlaks. Hence, it might be truly stated that independent Muslim rule in Sind and Multan began in 871 A.D., in the Punjab about 1160 A.D., and over the rest of Hindustan in 1206 A.D.

The next advance of the Crescent further south was made by Iltutmish, who invaded Mālwa in 1234 A.D., took the fortresses of Bhilsa and Māndu and destroyed the temple of Mahākālī in Ujjain. The Vindhya were not crossed until Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī led his famous expedition to Deogiri in 1294 A.D. Gujarat was conquered three years afterwards, in 1297 A.D., and Mewar (1303 A.D.), Wārangal, (1307 A.D.) Dwārasamudra, (1310 A.D.) and Madura (1311 A.D.) followed in quick succession. These brought Muslim dominion to its widest extent ever covered by the Crescent, within a hundred and five years of the establishment of the Sultanate of Delhi (1206 A.D.). Though politically under its Hindu rulers, Muslims had long before this established important settlements on the Malabar coast, and penetrated into Kashmir in the north-west, where the first Muslim dynasty was founded by the Persian Shāh Mir in 1339 A.D. With the exception of the extreme end of the southern peninsula, and Orissa in the east, and Gondwana in Chota Nagpur, practically all the provinces of India found the Crescent in their midst. Tirhut was conquered in 1324 A.D. by Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, Jājnagar in 1322, and Junāgarh in 1350 A.D. by Muhammad Tughlak, which served to round off the unfinished fringes of the Muslim Empire.

#### *Katabolism of the Empire:*

When this grand climacteric was reached, however, political katabolism set in. As we have noted before, during the dark days of Muhammad Tughlak, Ma'bar began the fatal process, in 1335 A.D. Bengal followed suit in 1337 A.D. and other provinces not long after. Thus, widest dominion was not held under Delhi for more than twenty-five years together (1311-35 A.D.). If the Sultanate of Delhi is to be reckoned as having been established with the fall of Prithvirāja and Jayachandra, in 1193 A.D., it lasted for 333 years up to Bābur's victory at Pānipat in 1526 A.D. During the greater part of this period, the rulers of Delhi enjoyed a fluctuating hegemony over most of Hindustan. The loss of Bengal in 1337 A.D. was a serious amputation. The separation of Madura and Telingana (1335), Daulatābad (1347), Gujarat (1396), Khāndesh (1399) and Mālwa (1401), considerably crippled the Empire. At one time, not merely were the dominions







of Delhi, too narrowly circumscribed, but even within the capital city itself, there were two rival Sultans, each claiming to be sovereign over the shadow of a vanished empire! By the law of the survival of the fittest, which was the only principle admitted by Islamic polity in practice, though not in theory, the time had come for a new power to arise in India. The pioneers had done their work, their best as well as their worst; they had plundered, destroyed, conquered, enslaved, made converts, slaughtered, ruled, extended dominion, put down rebellions, built edifices, canals, made prosperity possible, indulged in luxury, perpetrated inhuman crimes, and prepared the way for Nemesis. Retribution, when it came, proved relentless. The causes of their successes and failures may be considered with advantage at the close. Here we must have a look at their administration as a whole.

*Political Empiricism:*

Arab, Turk, Afghan, or Persian, they all belonged to one social scheme and they all worked alike. They brought no finished and perfect machinery with them, but, like all practical men, applied their downright pragmatism to each situation as it arose. Hence their government bore the anvil marks of the smithy in which it had been wrought. However crude the product, they were titans who had worked hammer and tongs at it. Though they failed in the end, others built on their foundations. One thing which marks out early Muslim polity in India, above everything else, is its *empiricism*; in this lay its strength as well as its weakness.

The pioneers of conquest, though they were not expert administrators, could not shirk the responsibilities that success in war devolved on them. Thus Imād-ud-din in Sind had to improvise a system of government which could not be readily assimilated to the traditional pattern. The conquered infidels were at first given no choice better than acceptance of Islam or death. But soon it was discovered that it was more worthwhile to spare them and utilise their services, which were indispensable, especially in the revenue administration, though they might be compelled to pay the *jizya*. Hence a vast Hindu population was suffered to survive, in the very first effort of Islam in India to subjugate them. Such accumulation of infidel subjects was bound to have far-reaching though, perhaps, insidious effects upon their conquerors.

In the second place, it is to be recollected that, after 871 A.D., the Arabs in Sind and Multan became virtually independent of the

Caliphate. The dismembered Indian province became more and more the asylum of all kinds of heretics (like the Karmatians), and thus a land not merely politically but also spiritually independent of the Commander of the Faithful. The later rulers of Sind and Multan were therefore a law unto themselves, and owned no master, religious or secular, except when they were temporarily compelled by some superior might from outside, as when Jām Babaniya was conquered by Fīrūz Tughlak. The conversion of its Rajput rulers, like the Sumrahs, to Islam, could not be without its own consequences on what ultimately turned out to be Islamic polity only in name. Islamic society was originally a theocracy, one and indivisible, of which the Caliph (after Muhammad's death) was the only head, spiritual as well as temporal. But the Jāms of Sind were normally their own sovereigns.

The great Idol-breaker of Ghazni, India's next Muslim conqueror, in spite of his acknowledgment of the pontificate of Bagdad, was by no means an orthodox stickler in matters political. He had felt commissioned to destroy idolatry and taken the vow of *jihād* on the infidels, plundered and destroyed Hindu temples, slaughtered, enslaved and converted thousands in India; but he too, like Imād-ud-dīn, appreciated the political value of even the unconverted Hindus. They were employed in the army, tolerated as feudatories like Rājyapāla of Kanauj, and preferred even in diplomatic service as in the case of Tilak. Mahmūd's successor, Masūd, as pointed out earlier, came to the throne after a clash of arms with his own brother Muhammad, whom he blinded and imprisoned. In the absence of a recognised law of peaceful succession, this precedent was invariably followed at the death of every Sultan. The law of the jungle dictated that the fittest should survive, and neither brother, nor father, nor uncle was spared. No sentiment or softer feeling stood between the ambitious and the throne. Thus did Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and Muhammad Tughlak also succeed. Even a slave, if he was found capable, was acknowledged master, as in the case of Aibak, Iltutmish, and Balban; and at least once (in the case of Rāziya), woman too was given a chance to try conclusions with strong political rivals. Khusru, the convert who followed Mubārak Khaljī on the throne of Delhi, might also have succeeded had he not waged war on the True Faith. Profession of Islam, though it might be repudiated in actual conduct, was the sole criterion which, together with the power to wield the sword successfully, determined political inheritance. Masūd was a drunkard, but

he had been blessed by the Commander of the Faithful, and had the power to strike for the throne. But even he fell by the law which had enabled him to succeed for a time. From the point of view of pragmatic selection the unconverted infidel, Tilak, was found eligible to be used against the rebellious Niyāltagin, the Muslim viceroy of Masūd in the Punjab. All the later Sultans of Delhi, as well as their *Chelas* in the provinces, were content, when they were orthodox, with levying the *jizya*, and availed themselves more and more of the political services of their Hindu subjects. The Muslims made no doubt better soldiers of the Crescent, but the infidels were found to be more acute administrators. Khān-Jahān Makbūl, Fīrūz Tughlak's capable minister, was a converted Brāhmaṇ; Rāja Todar Mal, a Khatri, served under Sher Shāh and Akbar later, equally efficiently, without being circumcised. These two prominent instances may be taken as indicating the trend in Islamic polity in India, while Tilak in the eleventh century may be considered as the forerunner of Mān Singh in the sixteenth.

This brief survey of the personnel of Muslim government in India leads to but one inference, viz., that Individuals counted for everything and not any legal concept : whether that individual was a Turk, Arab, Persian, Afghan, Abyssinian or Hindustani, convert or infidel, even male or female, free or slave, high-born or of low origin, was of secondary importance. As Bābur observed about the Sultans of Bengal later, there was 'little of hereditary descent in succession to sovereignty...whoever kills the King, and succeeds in placing himself on the throne, is immediately acknowledged as King.' In the words of Erskine, "*It was the individual, not the law, that reigned.*"

In the provinces and the outlying parts of the Empire, more or less, the same practice prevailed. "The monarchy was a congeries of nearly independent principalities, *jagirs* and provinces, each ruled by an hereditary chief, or by a zamindar or delegate from Delhi ; and the inhabitants looked more to their immediate governors, who had absolute power in the province and in whose hands consequently lay their happiness or misery, than to a distant and little-known sovereign." We have had a glimpse of the provincial administrations occasionally in the preceding chapters. There was not that degree of centralisation as was attained later under the Mughals. The conquered provinces were, indeed, placed in the charge of governors, appointed by the Sultan at Delhi, but they were responsible only for the regular payment of the stipulated annual tribute. If this was not

sent regularly to Delhi, the imperial Sultan came down with his army personally, or sent a trusted general or prince of the royal family, as Mubārak Khaljī and Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak did against Deogiri and Wārangal. Hindu Rājas, especially in the more distant or difficult tracts, were allowed to remain tributaries, as in the cases of Rām-achandra and Sankerdeo at Deogiri, Pratāparudra at Wārangal, Vira Ballāla at Dwārasamudra, and Maldeo at Chitor. But if they proved too refractory, like Harapāla of Deogiri, they met with a terrible fate, and were replaced by Muslim governors. The tragedy of Bahā-ud-dīn Gashtasp, under Muhammad Tughlak, served to show that neither religion nor kinship weighed with the Sultan in visiting vengeance upon rebellious governors. The provincial governor, like the Sultan's Deputy at the capital, who managed all affairs in the absence of the sovereign, was called *Naib Sultan*. His duties were both civil and military, as no bifurcation in this respect was made in medieval India. The governor was, in fact, a miniature monarch, and therefore the head of all the departments of government, revenue, executive and judicial. If he was so inclined, he could wage war with foreign powers and extend the dominion, even without the sanction of the central government. If he persecuted the Hindus and devastated their temples, he was within his bounds, provided, of course, the regulation share of the sovereign Sultan was not misappropriated. Otherwise, everything short of contumacy against the Sultan was fair. The character of the provincial administration depended both upon the local governor and his subordinates, as well as upon the central authority. A few examples may be cited to illustrate this: (1) Oudh prospered considerably under its efficient and benevolent governor, Ain-ul-Mulk Multani, so much so, that Muhammad Tughlak could depend upon its abundance to relieve the distress caused by famine in the western Doab; (2) Daulatābad, during the same period, was governed by an equally good-natured nobleman, Kutlugh Khān, but the people suffered on account of the corruption that prevailed among the subordinate officials; (3) at the same time, Mālwa groaned under the tyranny of Aziz Khummār, a law-born favourite of Muhammad Tughlak who had given him a *carte blanche*. Where the strong but abnormal methods of Muhammad Tughlak created only chaos, the mild and none too extraordinary measures of Firūz Tughlak proved eminently successful. These two Sultans, coming in such close sequence, and possessing such a contrast in character, afford an instructive study in the difficult art of government, demonstrating the futility of mere

impatient, revolutionary force, and the utility of sane, unsophisticated, constructive work. Firūz was no innovator, and he let sleeping dogs lie ; he recognised that, circumstanced as he was, the only road to recovery lay in parcelling out the Empire among a number of fief-holders, who should have sufficient independence and competence to keep them contented, at least for the time being. The Empire had been built up, not by incorrigible idealists, but by practical empiricists, and its foundations were not strong enough to bear the strain of any erratic genius. However, there was always scope for a constructive peace.

### *The Hierarchy of the Sultans:*

There were in all about thirty-two Sultans who ruled at Delhi, from Aibak to Bābur. They reigned during exactly 320 years (1206-1526 A.D.), making an average of ten years for every Sultan. The longest reigned of them all was Firūz Tughlak (1351-88 A.D.), though the widest dominions (for however short a time) were owned by Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and his successors down to Muhammad Tughlak (1311-35 A.D.). But the measure by which they must be judged is neither that of time nor space, since both have failed to endure. They ought to be appreciated in terms of the legacies they have left behind. Even according to this criterion, Firūz Tughlak would beat all others; but neither his two immediate predecessors (Muhammad and Ghiyās-ud-dīn), nor Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī deserve to be ignored. Likewise do the other Sultans merit some notice, if only because they present us with a proper perspective. Such a review of the entire hierarchy of the Sultans of Delhi will also reveal to the reader the core of their significance, which Lane-Poole, and such others as have subscribed to his view, missed in "the chronicle of kings and courts and conquests."

Lane-Poole, however, did not fail to find 'ample scope for the realization of strangely vivid and dramatic situations' in 'such contrasted characters as those of Alā-ud-dīn, Muhammad Tughlak, Bābur, Akbar and Aurangzeb,' who, according to him, "may rival any portrait gallery that could be collected in Europe in the same four centuries." It was round the lives of great men, and a few great women, among the rulers, in whose character and life he saw "infinite variety," he thought, "the chief interest of the Mediæval Period centres." But closer observation will show that the period also marked a change 'in the principles and methods of government' as well. From Mahmūd Ghazni (so far as his activities in India were concerned) to Akbar was a far cry; the former was content to be a

marauder, while the latter would not be satisfied with anything short of a national state. Yet, history being always continuous, the transition implied no violent change; and, as stated before, the Empire of the great Mughals was but the culmination of an evolutionary process which began with the predatory raids of the first Muslim adventurers.

Ignoring the Arab episode in Sind, Mahmūd Ghazni acted as the first pioneer and path-finder for Islam in this country. His raids, therefore, marked only the first stage in the creation of an Indo-Muslim polity. The track was followed up, in the second stage, by the permanent conquests effected by Muhammad Ghūri and his slaves. The third stage was marked by the establishment of a Muslim empire with its head-quarters in India, and not outside. With Delhi as their capital, Iltutmish and Balban tried to consolidate their Kingdom without attempting mere expansion. Theirs was only a military occupation of the land, and no lasting dominion could be founded before the jungle was cleared. So they employed all their energies in securing their hold, and there was ample police work to be done. This necessary preliminary task being accomplished by the Slaves, the Khalji's marched a stage further. Alā-ud-dīn, as already remarked, was the first experimenting Muslim administrator in India. But being a very practical man, though he was very ambitious, he allowed his better judgment to prevail in all matters of government. Fanatical though he was, in his policy towards the Hindus, he did not submit to the dictation of the doctors of Islam. "I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful," he declared; "whatever I think is for the good of the state, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree; and as for what may happen to me on the approaching Day of Judgment, that I know not." This was a bold and revolutionary declaration of policy for a Muslim monarch of medieval India to make. Monarchy itself was an innovation in the democratic society of Islam. Somehow it had come to stay, and it made amends by paying sedulous homage to the Caliphate even when that institution had become a mere shadow. But Alā-ud-dīn's assertion of his own authority over the heads of the theologians indicated not merely that the Muslim monarchy was firmly settled in this country, but also that it was going to be more and more secular in its political outlook. He was followed by the more adventurous Muhammad Tughlak, who, while he affected to be deeply religious, was at heart an innovating rationalist. He struck hard at everything that was effete. He destroyed the old nobility, and encouraged foreigners. He tolerated

the Hindus more liberally than his predecessors, and employed the Mughals in large numbers in his army. Like Peter the Great of Russia leaving old Moscow for his new capital of Petrograd, Muhammad forsook Delhi for Daulatābad. He launched upon reform in every direction, and seemed to stop short of nothing. He defied the *Ulema*, perhaps, more flagrantly than Alā-ud-dīn, and did not fear to antagonise them. In the opinion of Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "It was impossible for a man of his rational frame of mind to submit to the cramping influence of a narrow sectarianism, and his mind, liberalised by his wide culture and contact with men of different nationalities, refused to give assent to what was inconsistent with public interest and his own authority...He deprived the priestly class of its long enjoyed monopoly of the administration of justice, constituted himself into the Supreme Court of Appeal and freely revised, altered and rescinded the decisions of *Qazis* and *muftis*. He imposed a strict supervision over the administration of *waqf* properties and cashiered the *mutawalis*, who were mostly Shaikhs and Maulvis, for their malpractices...Muhammad's reign represents a struggle between philosophical rationalism and ecclesiastical dogmatism." (*Qaraunah Turks*, pp. 257-9.) Though the priestly domination was fully restored in the next reign, the Muslim state by now had definitely turned the corner, and become liberal in all but the religious sphere. The wave of religious reactionarism that followed the death of Muhammad Tughlak, indeed, continued up to the advent of the Mughals, but the rulers having been fairly Indianised, the country was no longer like a beleaguered city. The history of Delhi was now being repeated in the provinces, especially in the new Bahmani Kingdom, founded in 1347 A.D. Religious persecution, chiefly through heavy taxation of the Hindus, destruction of their temples, and even forced conversions, continued, but in a sporadic form. At the same time enlightened and broad-minded Muslim Sultans were also beginning to appear, like Zain-ul-Ābidīn in Kashmir (1417-67 A.D.) and Husain Shāh in Bengal (1493-1518 A.D.). These were the forerunners of the great Renaissance that was to follow.

#### *Administrative Improvement :*

The test of a political system is not so much its power of conquest, but good administration ; but administration itself is never good enough at any given moment. Its character, to a considerable extent, is determined by the conditions in which it has to function. Time and place are of the essence of all government, and we have



shown above how it depended also on the character of the Sultans and their subordinates. The composition of the subject populations was another factor to be reckoned with. With increasing association between the conquerors and the conquered, the state of belligerency was bound to dissolve into more harmonious relations. The social and cultural aspects of this rapprochement will be considered later. Before doing that, it is necessary to take note of the administrative adjustments that the Muslim rulers found it expedient to make. A review of the government, from Balban to Bābur, will show how administrative improvement went hand in hand with the extension of Muslim rule in India. It is not to be forgotten, however, that this depended entirely upon the individual characters of the Sultans at the capital and the governors in the provinces.

The first capable administrator the conquerors produced in India, as we have noticed, was Ghiyās-ud-dīn Balban. He ruled for twenty years as chief minister, under Nāsir-ud-dīn Muhammad, and for another twenty years as sovereign Sultan. During these two score years (1246-86 A.D.) he dominated over Hindustan, as none before him, and eminently succeeded in accomplishing his three-fold task : of keeping off the Mongols, suppressing rebellious governors, and repressing the Hindus. He did more besides. As Baranī says, 'he maintained the dignity, honour and majesty of the throne in a manner that could not be surpassed'. When he had Malik Baqbaq of Badāun, and Haibat Khān of Oudh, both nobles of considerable status, flogged and humiliated, he set up a precedent in the administration of justice that was relentlessly followed by all Muslim rulers who came after him. Muhammad Tughlak's punishment of his own nephew, and Ahmed Shāh of Gujarat's execution of his own son-in-law, may be cited as examples out of numerous cases of a like nature. This was one aspect of Muslim autocracy that came very near to the reign of law which is no respecter of persons, and is commendable despite its apparent ferocity. Under Muhammad Tughlak, we are also told, the mother of Prince Masūd was found guilty of adultery and, in accordance with the law of Islam, she was stoned to death. The terrible fate of Gashtasp, for the crime of treason, has been referred to more than once. Much of this ferocity was mitigated by Firūz Tughlak, who abolished numerous forms of torture, and thus tempered justice with mercy. This in itself constituted a welcome advance, in an important aspect of administration, that one of the most conservative

of Muslim monarchs of medieval India made even in that truculent age.

After Balban came Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī, whom we have characterised as a bold experimentalist in administration. We need not repeat here all the evidence, in confirmation of this estimate, which the reader will find elsewhere in this book. The secularisation of his autocracy, the substitution of cash-payment, as far as possible, in place of the pernicious system of granting fiefs to soldiers, the keeping of regular records and muster-rolls in the army, the branding of horses for identification, the control of prices and commodities and organisation of the markets, and the abolition or restriction of liquor traffic, done with whatever motive, were from the point of view of administrative improvement a distinct advance.

Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughlak, though not an innovator, ensured, during his short regime (1320-25 A.D.), a quiet prosperity, though it proved a lull before the stormy reign of his successor. His great contribution was the purification he effected in all departments of government which had become corrupt in the preceding years. He was the first Muslim ruler in India to be largely guided by a genuine desire for public weal. He did nothing, and allowed nothing to be done by others, that would have blocked the path of progress, or made the country suffer. His revenue policy was governed by the principles of moderation and justice. He revived the postal service, and his police and judicial organisation was so efficient that 'the wolf dared not seize upon the lamb.' Had he been followed by his nephew Firūz, instead of his son Muhammad, the country would have been spared the agonies of a talented tyrant's erratic experiments in administration. But Muhammad, quixotic though he was, made his own contributions to governmental reform. The failure of his token currency and attempt to change the capital, ought not to blind us to his undoubted services to administrative progress. His refinement of the coinage has been commented upon already. The lining out of the 700 miles' route from Delhi to Deogiri, with all its facilities and comforts for travellers, was in itself a marvel of administrative achievement. His heroic efforts at famine-relief, illustrated by the establishment of a great camp at Swargadwārī, the distribution of lavish doles, the appointment of a Royal Commission for land-survey, and generous subsidising of agricultural improvement, all showed the purity of his intentions, and the great advance that the Muslim rulers in India had made since the days of Mahmūd Ghazni for

whom the land of the infidels was only a rich quarry to despoil and devastate. Muhammad Tughlak strove neither to plunder nor to destroy infidelity, but rather to create an Ideal State according to his vision—no man could do better—though he defeated his own purposes through impatience and want of sufficient circumspection. But despite his "tragedy of high intentions self-defeated," he carried forward Alā-ud-dīn Khalji's war on sacerdotalism and tried to liberalise the administration by making it more cosmopolitan. He abolished *sati*, organised poor-relief, established schools and hospitals, patronised arts and industries, and showed beyond doubt that he aimed at enlightened administration. This policy, begun by Alā-ud-dīn Khalji, sustained by Ghiyās-ud-dīn, and carried forward by Muhammad, reached its culmination under Fīrūz Tughlak and Sikander Lodi.

The last two sovereigns differed from Muhammad Tughlak in being narrowly sectarian. But apart from their religious fanaticism, their principles of secular administration were in keeping with the trend in Muslim polity that we have traced so far. An account of the administrations of both Fīrūz and Sikander has already been given. The former abolished various forms of torture, relieved unemployment, reduced the burdens of taxation on Musalmans, built a beautiful system of canals, and considerably enhanced the prosperity of the country at large, so that 'By the blessing of God, and favourable seasons, abundance of the necessities of life prevailed, not only in the capital, but throughout his dominions.' 'Such rules were made that the *raiya*s grew rich and were satisfied... Their homes were replete with grain, property, horses, and furniture; every one had plenty of gold and silver; no woman was without her ornaments, and no house was wanting in excellent beds and couches. Wealth abounded and comforts were general. The whole realm of Delhi was blessed with the bounties of the Almighty.'

Sultan Sikander Lodi was the last of the great rulers of Delhi before the Mughals. He centralised the administration, had his *firmāns* read out to the populace in all parts of his empire, instituted a strict inspection and audit of accounts, safe-guarded the interests of traders and agriculturists, administered relief to the indigent, released prisoners on festive occasions, and maintained a close watch upon all happenings from day to day. 'No one was arbitrarily deprived of his jagir, and an established custom was never abrogated.' Similar conditions of material welfare continued up to Bābur's invasion, though much political turmoil was created by Sikander's

successor Ibrāhim. According to the *Tarikh-i-Dāudi*,

'One of the most extraordinary phenomena of Sultan Ibrāhim's time was that corn, clothes, and every kind of merchandise, were cheaper than they had ever been known to be in any other reign, except perhaps in the time of Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī; but even that is doubtful... Ten *maunds* of corn could be purchased for one *Bahloli*; five *sirs* clarified butter and ten yards of cloth could be purchased for the same coin. Everything else was in the same exuberance; the reason for all which was that rain fell in the exact quantity which was needed, and the crops were consequently luxuriant, and produce increased tenfold beyond the usual proportion... A respectable man with a family dependent on him might obtain wages at the rate of five *tankās* a month. A horseman received from 20 to 30 (*tankās*) as his monthly pay. If a traveller wished to proceed from Delhi to Agra, one *Bahloli* would, with the greatest ease, suffice for the expenses of himself, his horse, and escort.'

Making allowance for the very obvious exaggeration in the above account of an admiring Afghan, writing about the golden past of Pathan rule, the picture suggests that administrative improvements, from the days of Balban to those of Bābur, had resulted in considerable prosperity to the land and people, especially under the Khaljīs, Tughlaks, and Lodis.

#### *The Mechanism of Government :*

Having surveyed some of the salient features of Muslim rule in India, we might, at this stage, have a glimpse of its machinery of government. The first observation we have to make is that the original Theocracy of the Prophet and the Caliphs had given place to monarchy with nominal allegiance to the Caliphate, even before the creation of the Sultanate of Delhi. The Sultans were all dictators, but most of them, being orthodox Muslims, submitted to the *Ulema* or doctors of Islam for the declaration of the law, and frequently proclaimed their loyalty to the Commander of the Faithful. But the exigencies of the situation in India soon demanded the assertion of secular sagacity against the sacerdotalism of the theologians. The impracticable dictates of uncompromising Kāzis, like Mughis-ud-dīn of Bayāna, could not be followed literally in a country teeming with irrepressible infidels as India was. "God has commanded the abasement of the Hindus"; but the Hindus could not be abased. "The Prophet has also enjoined their spoliation, plunder and enslavement;" but spoliation, plunder and enslavement had been practised too long, and had come under the law of diminishing returns. "If the tax-collector chooses to spit into the mouth of a Hindu, his duty is to open his lips submissively so that he may do so;" but the Hindu too often preferred to be

a martyr. From the days of Imād-ud-dīn in Sind the hated infidel had been found indispensable. Under these circumstances, the practical wisdom of the Sultans prevailed over the irresponsible advice of the *Ulema*. Hence the revolt of Alā-ud-dīn and Muhammad against priestly domination. In the field of practical politics Alā-ud-dīn's dictum became the watchword of the administration: "I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful; whatever I think to be for the good of the state, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree."

The Sultan was thus all in all. He was the source of all power and justice. He was the sovereign head, and commander of the army. He was the pay-master. His will was law. The nobles and officials depended on his favour, and carried out his commands. He might consult them or insult them, as he might choose. Normally and in practice, no office, from the King to his subordinates, was considered as hereditary. Every one had to earn his place and keep it by dint of merit. The unworthy and weak went to the wall by the operation of the inexorable law of the survival of the fittest. Occasionally, a mild and benevolent ruler, like Firūz Tughlak, might respect hereditary titles, but the rule was otherwise.

(1) Next to the Sultan was the *Naib*, or Deputy of the Kingdom, who acted for the King during his absence from the capital. Malik Kāfur, Prince Juna Khān, and Khān-Jahān Makhbūl are some well known examples of persons filling this high office. As stated before, the provincial governors, being viceroys, were also known by the same title of Naib-Sultan.

(2) The *Kāzi-al-kuzat*, or Lord Chief Justice, also called *Sadr-i-jahān*, was the head of the judicial department, under him was (a) the *kazi* who pronounced judgment, (b) the *mufti* who expounded the law, (c) the *Kotwāl* or public prosecutor, (d) the *muhtāsib* or censor of public morals, and several other officials including an army of spies known as the *mānhis*. The *Hākim* was the magistrate. The law administered officially was the Islamic law of the *Koran* and the *hādīs*, but in civil matters the Hindus had some judicial autonomy in their *pañchāyats*. There was also a *Mir-Arz* or receiver of petitions.

(3) The chief finance officers were (a) the *Diwān-i-Ashrāf* or Accountant-General, (b) the *Mustaufi* or Auditor General of Imperial Accounts, and (c) the *Bakshi-i-fauj* or Pay-master of the army,—all

acting under the *wazir* and the *Diwān-i-wizārat* or the revenue office. Other important officials were (4) the *Hājib* or Lord Chamberlain, (5) the *Vakil-i-dār* or Keeper of the keys, (6) the *Amir-i-Akhur* or Superintendent of the stables, (7) the *Mir Imārat* or Chief Engineer, (8) the *Amir Kohi* or Director of Agriculture, and (9) the *Shaikh-al-Islam* or Chief Pontiff of the Realm.

The provincial governments took more or less after the central model, the governor being a replica of the Sultan. The system of farming out revenues prevailed for the most part, and the whole Empire was composed of innumerable fiefs or Assignments. The imperial army maintained at the capital was perhaps at its highest (370,000) for some time under Muhammad Tughlak. In time of war it was reinforced with contingents from the provinces maintained out of the assignments. Muster-rolls were kept for horses from the time of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī. There was a postal service which worked fairly successfully, keeping up a close contact between the capital and the provinces. This was worked by a system of horse and foot relays placed at intervals from three in a *kos* to one every four miles. The following interesting account of it is given by Dr. Ishwari Prasad:—

“At every post ten swift runners were stationed, well-equipped for the journey, armed with staffs with ringing bells attached to their top. It was their duty to carry letters and messages from one place to another. The courier took his letters in one hand and his staff which was two yards in length in the other and ran at full speed and handed over the letters to the next runner who kept himself ready in advance. In this way letters were conveyed from one place to another with great facility and quickness in spite of long distances. Sometimes fruits and other edibles from Persia and Khorasan were also brought for the Sultan by this post. At each of these postal stations the state had built, for the comfort of the wayfarers, mosques, reservoirs of drinking water, and markets where necessities of life could be purchased. The post was also used at times to convey criminals guilty of serious offences, to the capital or the headquarters of the province to receive immediate punishment. From Delhi to Daulatābad, at every station, drums were placed, which were beaten when an unusual event occurred in either of the two cities and in this way the Sultan was quickly informed of what happened in either city during his absence...Ibn Batūtah writes that when he was in Daulatābad the Sultan used to get Ganges water for drinking purposes from the north by means of this post.”

When the Empire had reached its widest extent it was composed of twenty-three provinces:

(1) Badāun, (2) Bihar, (3) Delhi, (4) Deogiri, (5) Dwārasamudra, (6) Gujarat, (7) Hānsi, (8) Jājnagar, (9) Kalanaur, (10) Kanauij, (11) Kara, (12) Kuhram, (13) Lahore, (14) Lakhnauti, (15) Mā'bar,

(16) Mālwa, (17) Multan, (18) Oudh, (19) Samana, (20) Sehwan  
(21) Sirsuti, (22) Telang, and (23) Uch.

*The Treatment of Infidels :*

In the midst of plethoric plenty famine has sometimes stalked over this country carrying away thousands at a time. The conquerors had devastated the land with war and plundering raids and looted enormous wealth from temples and royal treasuries. They spent this mostly in mobilising larger armies and luxuriating in their capitals. Before the advent of the Muslims the people in the villages had taken care of themselves when the kings neglected them. They were left unmolested even in times of war. This immunity was destroyed by the Muslims. Those who did not scruple to murder their own nearest relations in order to grasp at power and pelf were not the people to spare infidel populations. Neither age nor sex afforded sanctuary where men, women and children were alike slaughtered, enslaved or converted. We have noted how at times heaps of the dead were left to putrefy, contaminating the atmosphere for miles around. The vast mass of the people continued to be Hindus despite the havoc wrought in their midst by the foreigners. They were made to pay very heavily for the crime of sticking to their ancestral religion. Besides having to pay the *jizya*, the Hindus had to bear more than their share of other taxes. Islamic tradition not only sanctioned the invidious treatment of the infidels, but made it a duty to exact from them the price of even their limited toleration to the full. A decree of Caliph Omar II ordered the levying of double the normal taxes on trade in the case of the *Zimmi*. The fiat of another Caliph, Al-Mutawakkil, laid down rules regulating the dress the Christians were permitted to wear, and the saddles in which they could ride. We have seen how Alā-ud-din Khalji followed a similar policy in India. The Hindus, according to him, 'will never become submissive and obedient till they are reduced to poverty.' Hence they were taxed to the extent of half the produce of their lands, besides *jizya* and taxes on buffaloes, goats and milch-cattle. 'At my command they are ready to creep into holes like mice.' They were not to be left sufficient competence "to enable them to keep a horse to ride on, to carry arms, to wear fine clothes, or to enjoy any of the luxuries of life."

This might be taken as the fairly normal condition of the Hindus under most of their Muslim rulers. There may have been some

slight mitigation in the time of Muhammad Tughlak, but his was a solitary exception, so far as Delhi was concerned. Even this temporary abatement was more than compensated for during the reactionary régime that continued thereafter until the advent of the Mughals. That occasionally the Sultan happened to be the son of a Hindu mother or the chief minister a converted Brāhmaṇ made no difference; on the contrary, by a strange law that is worthy of investigation, they turned out to be the more fanatical, as in the case of Fīrūz Tughlak and Khān-Jahān Makbūl. Under the régime of these two, even Brāhmaṇs, who had been hitherto exempted from *jizya*, were forced to pay it; while the Muslims, whose burdens had always been lighter, were further relieved by the remission of numerous imposts which were not sanctioned by Islamic law. [“The income of the state according to the orthodox jurists consisted of (1) the *Jizya* from the subject populations, (2) the *Usher* or 1/10 from the Muslims who held land of the state, (3) a tax on trade, (4) natural products taken from the subject population, (5) tribute from foreign powers, (6) 1/5 of the spoils acquired in war, (7) and the *Khiraj* or land-tax from non-Muslims who held land.”—Dr. Ishwari Prasad, *Mediæval India*, p. 71.] By burning a Brāhmaṇ alive at the palace gates, for the crime of publicly worshipping in his own way and attracting even Muslim devotees, Fīrūz and Makbūl laid the coping stone over their persecution of the Hindus. Sikander Lodi, another despot, who was most benevolent towards his co-religionists, not content with destroying and desecrating their temples, prohibited Hindus from bathing at the sacred *ghāts* on the Jamuna and most erratically even banned barbers from shaving them. Under the Bahmanis, one ruler, while famine was raging in the country, ordered the regular importation of corn from Mālwa and Gujarat to be sold at low prices, “but only to the Muslims.” Ahmed Shāh of the same dynasty celebrated his raids into Vijayanagara territory by killing every 20,000 men, women and children he captured; and, according to Ferishta, Muhammad Shāh I Bahmani killed no less than 500,000 Hindus during his reign. The slaughter of 100,000 infidels by order of Timūr before he entered Delhi, when even the pious and learned Maulana Nāsir-ud-dīn Omar, who had never killed a sparrow in his life, slew fifteen Hindus with his own hand, may be taken as typical of the Muhammadan conquerors’ attitude towards the hated idolaters of India. But that, out of all this turmoil and agony and slaughter, a new order should arise was inevitable. The Wycliffe of this political Reformation was Zain-ul-Ābidīn of Kashmir.



*The Condition of the Country :*

We have at least three good witnesses to enlighten us on the general conditions in the country, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. It is also fortunate that all of them happened to be foreigners. They were (1) the Venetian Marco Polo, who visited South India between 1288 and 1293 A.D., (2) the Moorish Ibn Battuta, who travelled widely in most parts of the country between 1334 and 1342 A.D., and (3) Mahuan a Chinese interpreter who was in Bengal in 1406 A.D. It is a great relief to learn something of the 'simple annals of the people' from the pages of these writers, after having surveyed the sickening tale of 'kings and courts and conquests' in which alone the Muslim chroniclers appeared to be interested. There were also others like the Persian Wassāf whom we have mentioned before.

All the writers named above agree in their estimate of the general prosperity of the country, especially in Bengal, Ma'bar and Gujarat. Marco Polo, as well as Ibn Battuta bear witness to the flourishing trade at the ports like Kāyal, Calicut, Cambay and Broach. Merchants came from Kis, Hormes, Dofar, Soer, etc., bringing with them mostly horses, gold, silver and copper, while they carried back only commodities of herbs and gums, i.e. pepper, ginger, indigo, etc. There was also a precious pearl trade at Kāyal (on the Tāmrarni) which Marco Polo describes as 'a great and noble city.' Cotton was the staple product and was widely cultivated, its plants growing to the height of 'full six paces.' In the Telugu country they wove fine fabrics out of this: "In sooth they look like tissue of spider's web!" says Marco Polo; "there is no king nor queen in the world but might be glad to wear them." The people have also, he adds, "the largest sheep in the world, and great abundance of all the necessities of life." In Ma'bar, parents trained their boys at the age of thirteen "to be very dexterous and keen traders." The Indian merchants of Gujarat were the best and most truthful in the world. Foreign dealers found them very loyal, for they sought "zealously the profit of the foreigner," asking no commission beyond what they were pleased to bestow.

Except at the recognised ports, piracy was rampant in the seas, but travelling by land was not unsafe. Horses were so much valued, says Marco Polo, that hardly any ship came to India without bringing horses along with other commodities. The king of Thāṇa permitted piracy on the understanding that all horses captured should

be considered as State property. The Indian vikings did not murder their victims but said, "Go along with you and get more gain, and that mayhap will fall to us also!" The way to collect debts from evasive borrowers was very queer. The creditor if he succeeded in drawing a circle round the debtor, the latter would not dare to pass outside it without the creditor's permission "for fear of the penalty of the law." Marco Polo witnessed a Rāja being thus treated by a foreign merchant.

Telingana was ruled by Queen Rudramma, "a lady of much discretion." During forty years "she had administered her realm as well as ever her husband did, or better; and as she was a lover of justice, of equity and of peace, she was more beloved by those of her kingdom than ever Lady or Lord of theirs before." Many women, when their husbands died, burned themselves along with the body, and won great praise for doing so. The Hindus were strict vegetarians, and abstained from alcohol contenting themselves with chewing *pān*. They were extremely cleanly and avoided the contamination of drinking from common vessels. In the estimation of the Venetian, they were also superstitious, believing as they did in astrology, "sorcery, magic, and geomancy, and such like diabolical arts." The Brāhmanas of Gujarat were confirmed idolaters, and some of them (obviously Digambar Jains) went stark naked, declaring, "We have no sin of the flesh to be conscious of, and therefore we are not ashamed of our nakedness." Marco Polo also observed that "They would not kill an animal on any account, not even a fly, or a flea, or a louse, or anything in fact that has life; for they say these have all souls, and it would be sin to do so."

Ibn Battuta's account of the people is equally interesting and valuable. He found that, although the Hindus observed caste regulations strictly, they were very hospitable. The practice of hoarding wealth was common, and the Moor confirms Marco Polo's observation regarding the law of debt being peculiar. If a big Amir was in debt, the creditor would block his way to the palace and shout imploring the Sultan's aid. The debtor in his embarrassment would be either constrained to pay or make a definite promise. If necessary the Sultan interfered and enforced payment. Another peculiar custom noted by Ibn Battuta was *Marmakatāyam*, or the law of inheritance as it has always prevailed in Malabar, according to which a sister's son, instead of the heir of one's own body, legally inherits property. The penal code of Malabar was also Draconic inasmuch as theft,

even though it be that of a cocoanut, was punishable with death. He was surprised, on the other hand, to find that people on the west coast cared much for education. At Honāvar, for instance, the traveller found thirteen schools for girls and twenty-three for boys. He also noticed that Calicut was a flourishing emporium frequented by traders from all parts of the world.

We have already referred to Bengal being considered by the Muslims as 'hell crammed with good things'. Ibn Battuta speaks of it as a rich and fertile province. Prices were low, as in other parts of India, and even men with small incomes could live in ease and comfort. According to Mahuan, the shipping and foreign trade of Bengal was also flourishing. The province produced two crops of rice in a year, besides wheat, hemp, ginger, pulse, and vegetables in large quantities. Though most of the people were content with betel, and tea was not grown in the country, fermented drinks were prepared from rice and cocoanuts. Among the most noteworthy manufactures were white paper made from the bark of a tree, 'smooth and glossy like the skin of deer,' and silk fabrics embroidered with gold, 'painted ware, basins, cups, steel, guns, knives, and scissors.'

Wassāf similarly speaks of Gujarat as a rich and populous country, with 7000 towns and villages abounding in wealth. But, as we have remarked above, there was at times such acute misery among the masses that, when famine visited, some of them, unable to bear the pangs of hunger, drowned themselves in the rivers. Prices were, no doubt, extremely low, but the Hindus suffered from the systematic grinding to which most of their Muslim rulers subjected them. They had been reduced to being mere 'Hewers of wood and drawers of water' in their own land which was ordinarily 'flowing with milk and honey'. Under Firūz Tughlak the revenue of Delhi and its territories alone had risen to six *crores* and eighty-five *lacs of tankās*; but it was money mostly extorted from the Hindus. They had little compensation in the State charities and public works which were primarily designed for the Faithful. It was under such circumstances that their distress was further exploited by zealous Sultans like Firūz, who sought to earn merit in Heaven by converting the helpless in large numbers.

'I encouraged my infidel subjects,' writes Firūz complacently in his autobiography, 'to embrace the religion of the Prophet, and I proclaimed that every one who repeated the creed and became a Musalmān should be exempt from the *jizya*

or poll-tax. Information of this came to the ears of the people at large, and great numbers of Hindus presented themselves, and were admitted to the honour of Islām. Thus they came forward day by day from every quarter, and adopting the Faith, were exonerated from the *jizya*, and were favoured with presents and honours.'

[The *jizya* was paid in three grades: (1) 40 *tankās*, (2) 20 *tankās*, and (3) 10 *tankās*. Under Firūz, the Brāhmaṇs had to pay 10 *tankās* and 50 *jitals*. According to Thomas, 64 *jitals* made one *tankā* in the fourteenth century. A *tankā* contained 175 grains of silver against 180 grains of the later rupee.]

#### B. CULTURAL RAPPROCHEMENT

In reviewing the results of the Arab conquest of Sind we remarked that the foreigners, though victorious in arms, were themselves captivated by the culture of the vanquished, and also that the history of the Arabs in Sind was but the epitome of the history of Islam in India. Medieval Hindu India, despite her political weakness, was culturally so full of vitality that, to use the great Bengali saint Chaitanya's simile she was like the tree which gives shade even to him who cuts its boughs: 'Rain and storm and the burning rays of the sun it suffers, yet continues to give sweet-scented flowers and delicious fruits.' Or, in the words of E.B. Havell, "Islam seized her political capitals, controlled her military forces, and appropriated her revenues, but India retained what she cherished most, her intellectual empire, and her soul was never subdued." In the heroic spirit of that noble Rajput lady, the mother of Firūz Shāh, India, he says elsewhere, surrendered her body to the Muhammadan conqueror that from her womb a new Islam might be born. She, indeed, won back by spiritual weapons what she had lost on the battlefield. Captivating and fruitful as this aspect of our study is, we have here to content ourselves with a few illustrative facts revealing the cultural *rapprochement* that, though imperceptible at first, inevitably set in after the Muslims had made this country their permanent home. But the effects were reciprocal. As one recent writer has put it, "Not only did Hindu religion, Hindu art, Hindu literature, and Hindu science, absorb Muslim elements, but the very spirit of Hindu culture and the very stuff of Hindu mind were also altered, and the Muslim reciprocated by responding to the change in every department of life." (Dr. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p. 137.)

It will be convenient to consider this mingling of the two streams of culture under two definite categories: (1) Art and Architecture; (2) Literature and Religion.

*Art and Architecture:*

*Coinage:* The only form of Art, apart from the decorative and architectural, which is of special interest in Muslim India is that connected with Numismatics. Of all the sources of information, of undoubted contemporaneous character, from which we are able to learn more than at first sight appears, the coins of the Muslim kings are extremely valuable. Their designs, calligraphy, mint-marks, and legends constitute a type of chronicles that yield ready information of an interesting nature. Minting coins was a royal prerogative that was jealously guarded by the Muslim monarchs, though the crudeness of their make often exposed them to the risk of counterfeiting. From the royal titles, the date and name of the place of minting, etc., we are enabled to determine, the extent of the Kingdom and even the character and status of the monarch. To cite only one example, the coins of Muhammad Tughlak were minted at Delhi, Daulatābad, and several other provincial capitals, and were of at least twenty-five different varieties. Among these were the token-coins of the Forced Currency. The dates of the currency experiment are ascertained from the data they supply. The legends include 'The warrior in the cause of God,' 'He who obeys the Sultan obeys the Compassionate,' and the substitution of the name of the Caliph of Cairo for that of the king, etc. Some of them also bear an inscription in Nāgarī as well. From the point of view of Islam's adjustment to the exigencies of the country it had conquered, the earliest coins are the most instructive. For example, the gold coins of Muhammad Ghūri, "struck in imitation of the Hindu kings of Kanauj with the goddess Lakshmi on the obverse, are, except for the earliest gold issue of Haidar Ali of Mysore, without a parallel in Muhammadan history." Coins known as the *Dehlwāla* with the humped bull of Śiva and the sovereign's name in Nāgarī on the obverse, and the Delhi Chauhān type of horseman on the reverse, lasted till the reign of Alā-ud-dīn Musūd (1241-46 A.D.). On some of this class, Iltutmish's name is associated with that of Chāhāda-deva of Narwar. A unique specimen bears the names of Muhammad bin Sām and Prithvirāja on the obverse and reverse respectively.

*Architecture:* Just as in the early coins Hindu and Muslim traditions mingled, so did their architectural styles combine to produce the so-called Indo-Saracenic type. We have noted how the Arabs were poor builders and had to adapt foreign models to their requirements. But the Turks seemed to possess a genius for architecture. Fergusson

has observed, "Nothing could be more brilliant, and at the same time more characteristic, than the commencement of the architectural career of these Pathans in India...A nation of soldiers equipped for conquest and that only, they of course brought with them neither artists nor architects, but, like all nations of Turanian origin, they had strong architectural instincts, and, having a style of their own, they could hardly go wrong in any architectural project they might attempt. At the same time, they found among their new subjects an infinite number of artists quite capable of carrying out any designs that might be propounded to them." Already in the course of our political narrative we have alluded to the building achievements of the various Sultans, from Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak to Firūz Tughlak at Delhi, and also those of the other provinces like Bengal, Jaunpur, Mālwa, Gujarat, Khāndesh and the Bahmani kingdom. Even a brief architectural survey of the Muslim kingdoms would make very interesting reading, but, for want of space, we must confine ourselves here to a few examples only, particularly those revealing a synthesis of the Hindu and the Muslim styles. Such a survey, however brief, will bear "eloquent testimony to the enduring vitality of Hindu art under an alien rule and to the wonderful capacity of the Muslim for absorbing that art into his own and endowing it with a new and grander spirit."

In spite of the barbarities they perpetrated the Muslim conquerors were no mere barbarians. Even Mahmūd Ghazni, who ruthlessly destroyed the magnificent temples of Mathura and Brindāvan, stopped for a while in sheer admiration before he struck his blow in the cause of Religion. After all, "*It's the cause,*" and, however fascinating Desdemona might be, Othello must not stay his hand. From the Idol-breaker to Timūr Lane the conquerors were careful to spare the far-famed Hindu artisans and took them to Ghazni and Samarkand to build for the Muslims. The Turks had "instinct rather than training," and, in India, they gave full vent to the "inborn artistry" of their nature with the help of the matchless workers of Hindustan. The strong antithesis that existed between the requirements of the Muslim masters and the artistic conventions of the Indian employees, far from proving an obstacle, served rather to enrich the architectonics of both. "The monotheistic puritanism of Islam delighted in the simplicity of the unbroken dome, the plain symbolism of the pointed arch and the slenderness of the minaret.....Hindu polytheism, on the other hand, invited to variety and complexity of form and the decoration of every part with deep bas-relief and the human figure...The conquerors

could not fail to be influenced by the arts which had flourished around them. Hindu ornament began to invade the simple Islamic forms.....The plain severity of the dome submitted to the imposition of the *kalasha*, or ornate lotus-cresting, and its metal finial gave place to an elaborate carving in stone. Moreover the Muhammadans learned from the Hindus lessons in the proportionate massing of buildings and the disposition of their parts. Lack of symmetry was remedied; and in the tombs of Isa Khan and Humayun, we find a splendid synthesis of Muslim ideals and Hindu methods of treatment.” No better summary could be given, of the main features of the *rapprochement* between the two peoples in the realm of architecture, than this succinct statement of Sir Henry Sharp. (*Delhi, Its Story and Buildings*, pp. 20-21. )

The evolution of the Indo-Muslim style, which began with the Minar and Mosque of Kutb-ud-dīn at Delhi and culminated in the exquisite edifices of Agra and Fathpur Sikri, is described by Sharp in four distinct stages: (1) In the first stage were erected the buildings of Old Delhi under the Slaves and Khaljīs; (2) in the second stage the Tughlaks built the extensions of Tughlakābad and Hisar-Firūza; (3) in the third stage came the constructions of the Saiyids and the Lodis; and (4) in the fourth stage arose the magnificent creations of the Mughals. Five out of the seven cities of Delhi, excluding the modern, belonged to the period before Bābur, and most of the provincial cities were but replicas of the imperial capital. Hence, Sir Henry's observation that “The buildings of Delhi furnish a striking epitome of the history both of the city itself and of Hindustan” is quite justified.

In the pre-Tughlak architecture, “Not merely do the high Muhammadan arches contrast with the low, richly-carved Hindu colonnades, but the workmanship of those arches themselves and of the great minar show unmistakable Hindu characteristics applied to Muhammadan design. These monuments are the expression of a victorious, imaginative and semi-barbaric race carried out by the quiet, painstaking experience of their more civilized subjects.” The orthodox Tughlaks, especially Ghiyās-ud-dīn and Firūz, sedulously tried to eschew Hindu influence, and produced at their best a stern and gloomy architecture, puritanically pure. But soon after Timūr's invasions, we find in the Makhdum Sabzawari “a fitting link with the style of the Sayyid and Lodi dynasties. The Hindu features of the gate, the external dripline on the mosque, and the plaster

decoration on the interior of the dome of the tomb, bespeak the passing of the puritan period of art at Delhi."

In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, although politically "the empire was practically in abeyance," there was developed at Delhi a style in architecture which according to Fergusson, formed "the last expiring effort of the Pathans, or the first dawn of that of the great Mughals, and it is well worthy of either." Sharp adds, "Inglorious as the period was, it furnishes a fine series of architectural efforts, and, while linked with the Tughlaq style by the restrained sedateness of most of its effects, exhibits a new synthesis with Hindu forms and paves the way to the larger splendours of the Mughals."

In the provinces the local influences are seen at their best in Gujarat, Bengal, and Kashmir, while Jaunpur, Mālwa, and the Deccan either imported a foreign style, like the Persian at Bidar (*e. g.*, the *Madrassa* of M. Gāwān), or merely copied the Islamic architecture of Delhi, as at Māndu, though not unmixed with Hindu touches of grace and strength and beauty. Though we may not fully agree with Havell when he says, "This new Islamic culture, which began when Mahmūd of Ghazni made the royal craftsmen of Mathurā and Kanauj build for him the mosque of 'the Celestial Bride', *is in everything but name a Hindu Renaissance*," still there is much truth in his observation that Ahmedābad, the capital of Muhammadan Gujarat, was created by the royal craftsmen of Rajputāna; the Gaur of the Mussalman Sultans was a new Lakhnauti; Benares was the mother of Jaunpur; Dhār the mother of Māndu; the royal craftsmen of the Vijayanagara Rājas built the capital of the Muhammadan dynasty of Bijāpur.

#### *Literature and Religion :*

"Seldom in the history of mankind," says Sir John Marshall, "has the spectacle been witnessed of two civilisations, so vast and so strongly developed, yet so radically dissimilar as the Muhammadan and Hindu, meeting and mingling together. The very contrasts which existed between them, the wide divergences in their culture and their religions, make the history of their impact peculiarly instructive." We have noticed above the results of this impact in the coinage and architecture of Muslim India. A survey of the literature and religion of the period will further corroborate the impressions already formed.

*Literature :* Readers will recollect what was said earlier about the Arab conquest of Sind. The cultural treasures that the Arabs took away from India were, indeed, the richest booty they got. The



*Brahma Siddhānta* and *Khanda-Khādyaka* were not to be the only Sanskrit works translated by the Muslims. It was significant that Mahmūd Ghazni was accompanied by Al-Biruni, an accomplished Sanskrit scholar, whose passion for dispassionate learning, wherever it could be had, was as consuming as that of his master for material wealth. Even the fanatical Firūz Tughlak found interest in securing a rare Sanskrit manuscript during the sack of Nagarkot, and getting it translated into Persian and calling the new work *Dalaya-l-Firūz Shāhi*. Similar interest in native literature was evinced by other Muslim rulers whose outlook was frankly wider than that of Firūz. Among these, Husain Shāh of Bengal and Zain-ul-Ābidin have already been mentioned. On their side, the most valuable contribution to Indian literature that the Muslims made was in the shape of historical chronicles like the *Tarikh-i-Firūz Shāhi* from which we have largely quoted. Al-Biruni had rightly found the Hindus deficient in historical sense, though after him they produced works like *Rājataranginī* and the *Chānd Rāisa*. But for the writings of chroniclers like Baranī, Afif and Yahya, our knowledge of medieval Indian would have been poor indeed.

When the Muslim invaders made India their home, married Hindu wives, lived, moved, and had their being in the midst of Hindusfanis, a *modus vivendi* was bound to be discovered which would be inevitably a compromise between the best and the worst on either side. In dress, speech, manners, customs, and intellectual outlook, the two influenced each other very profoundly, as is evidenced by the religious and literary movements of the age. In a sense these two movements were interdependent and inextricably connected together, for when a people are stirred to their depths they burst into creative expression of which the literary medium is the most facile and general. It was such an *elan vital* that produced the religious movements of medieval India and our vernacular literature. A brief notice of the rise of these, strictly from the point of view of the cultural coming together of the Hindus and Muslims, should be a fitting close to our study of the age.

*Zabān-i-Urdu* or the language of the army was one of the first fruits of the contact between the Persian, Arabic, or Turki speaking foreigners and the Hindi speaking Indians. Though it took a long time for this dialect to develop into a literary medium, it was in its spoken form largely used by the Muslims to impart their religion to the natives. "It is an astonishing fact," says Bailey, "that literary composition in

Urdu was going on in the Deccan for hundreds of years before it really began in north India." The reason he assigns for this is extremely interesting for the student of Muslim history in that part of the country. We have already noted the division of the Deccani Musalmans into Foreigners and Natives. Especially after the rise of the Bahmani Kingdom the native Muslims of the south wished to be as separate as possible from the imperial capital in the north and "they developed a local patriotism with a desire to emphasise their own life and modes of thought; and lastly they began to suspect and dislike outsiders. This resulted in a cultivation of Urdu, as opposed to Persian which was the language of the Emperor's Court." This new dialect in the south was known as *Dakhni* and was considerably influenced by Gujarāṭi and Marāṭhi. In the middle of the fourteenth century there was no real difference between Delhi *Urdu* and *Dakhni*, but after the separation of the Bahmani Kingdom the two dialects began to diverge. Shāh Mirān, one of the Muslim saints of Bijapur (d. 1496 A.D.) preached and wrote in Urdu, because, he says in a striking passage of his *Shahādat-ul-Haqiqat*, it was a language which all could understand.

Hindi literature is older, and much more interesting for our present subject. Its provincial variations and linguistic aspects need not be dwelt upon here. Chānd Bardāi, Prithvirāja's court-poet, was the earliest writer of note in the language. He got killed together with his master in 1192 A.D. after Tarāin. In his *Prithi Rāj Rāso* occur the following beautiful lines regarding Padmāvati or Sanjogata:

Arrayed with the tokens of the King of Love,  
Filling a golden tray with pearls,  
Lighting a lamp she waved it round;  
Taking her confidant with her, boldly the maiden  
Goes, as Rukmini went to meet Murāri.

Sārang Dhar was another bard who has sung of Rāja Hammir of Rantambhor, but for the literature of Hindu revival we must turn to the poet saints of the *Bhakti* school.

*Religion*: Even here we must confine ourselves rigidly to some of the profound effects the two religions produced upon each other. Caste, idolatry and esoteric obscurantism were the three baneful aspects of Hinduism that had been ruthlessly attacked by the protagonists of Islam, which was itself a non-idolatrous, simple and democratic creed that observed no distinctions of caste or race. The Hindu religious revival in the fifteenth century was, therefore, marked by

attempts at reform in these very directions. Firstly, Rāmānuja in the south (12th century) Nāmadev in the Deccan, Mira Bai in Rajputāna, Rāmānand, Kabir and Rai Dās at Benares, Chaitanya in Bengal, and Nānak in the Punjab (all in the 15th century), by preaching and practice, denounced the Brāhmanical caste exclusiveness; secondly, though some of them inculcated *bhakti* in which idols found an important place, they emphasised the unity of God and the true spirit of religion as distinguished from mere idolatry: and thirdly, they appealed to the hearts of the people by singing to them mostly in the language of the masses, as against the esoteric Sanskrit of the Brāhmanical school. Rāmānuja, Rāmānand, and Chaitanya were Brāhmins, Nāmadev was a tailor, Mira Bai a Rajputni, Kabir a Muslim weaver, Rai Dās a cobbler, and Nānak a Khatri. These were not all. They came from all castes and all provinces and preached against caste. The keynote of their teaching may be found in the following lines from Kabir:

If God be within the mosque, then to whom does this world belong?

If Rām be within the image, then who is there to know what happens without?

Hari is in the East; Allāh is in the West. Look within your own heart,  
for there you will find both Karim and Rām.

All the men and women of the world are His living forms.

Kabir is the child of Allāh and Rām; He is my Gurū; He is my Pir.

Vain too are the distinctions of caste.

All shades of colour are but broken arcs of light.

All varieties in human nature are but fragments of Humanity.

The right to approach God is not the monopoly of Brāhmins, but belongs to  
all who are sincere of heart.

A perusal of the religious writings of the age will show that Kabir was not a solitary idealist but that he had his fore-runners and followers in all parts of the country. One or two more citations may not be out of place: Nānak preached like Kabir to Hindus and Muslims alike and said:

Hadst thou the eighteen *Purāṇas* with thee,

Couldst thou recite the four *Vedas*,

Didst thou bathe on holy days and give alms according to man's castes,

Didst thou fast and perform religious ceremonies day and night,

Wast thou a *Kāsi*, a *Mulla*, or a Sheikh,

A *Jogi*, a *jangam*, didst thou wear an ochre-coloured dress,

Or didst thou perform the duties of a householder—

Without knowing God, Death would bind and take all men away.

"I belong not to any of the four castes," he declared, "Nānak is with those who are low-born among the lowly." And to the Musalmans his advice was

Make kindness thy mosque, sincerity thy prayer-carpet, what is just and lawful thy Korān,

Modesty thy circumcision, civility thy fasting, so shalt thou be a Musalman.  
Make right conduct thy *Ka'bah*, truth thy spiritual guide, good works thy creed and thy prayer,

The will of God thy rosary, and God will preserve thine honour, says Nānak.

That these reformist sentiments were not confined to provinces where Muslims abounded is also proved by similar echoes being heard in the farthest corner of South India, where the Siddhars taught :

No Image made  
Of stone or wood, no *linga* stump  
Built of earth and made by hand  
Could ever seem divine to one  
Who knew he came from God.  
How many flowers I gave  
At famous temple shrines !  
How many *mantras* said !  
Oft washed the idol's head !  
And still with weary feet  
Encircled Śiva's shrines !  
But now at last I know  
Where dwells the King of Gods,  
And never will salute  
A temple made with hands.

Another preacher of the same school addressing the Brāhman asks in all conscience—

O Brāhmaṇs, list to me  
And answer if you can !  
Do rain and wind avoid  
Some men among the rest  
Because their caste is low ?  
When such men tread the earth,  
Hast seen it quake with rage ?  
Or does the brilliant sun  
Refuse to them its rays ?  
When shall our race be one great brotherhood  
Unbroken by the tyranny of caste ?

And with the conviction of sincere faith assures—

O Brāhmaṇs list to me !  
In all this blessed land  
There is but one great caste,

One tribe and brotherhood.  
 One God doth dwell above  
 And he hath made us one  
 In birth and frame and tongue.

It is not difficult to find in all these utterances the far-reaching influences of monotheistic Islam. "Islam with its clear, definite, and simple creed, which stood in contrast to the indigenous vagaries of the imagination and speculation about God," Mr. Titus observes in his *Indian Islam*, "appealed to many Hindus as a satisfying solution to the vexed problem of theology. To others its social democracy granted welcome release from the bondage of caste. But when all is said there seems to be little doubt that Hinduism has wrought a far greater change in Islam than Islam has wrought in Hinduism, which still continues to pursue the even tenor of its way with a complacency and confidence that are amazing." How true this remark is will become more apparent when we shall have reviewed the history of the next and the greatest and the last Empire of the Crescent in India. The Turks did their worst on Hindu society and failed: the Mughals were to attempt their best and yet never succeed.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

- 1384      Death of Wycliffe.
- 1400-70    Rāmānand. Death of Chaucer.
- 1440-1518   Kabir.
- 1452-1519   Leonardo da Vinci.
- 1469-1539   Nānak.
- 1470      Mira Bai born.
- 1473      Copernicus born.
- 1484      Bābur born.
- 1485      Chaitanya born. Henry Tudor's victory at Bosworth.
- 1486      Bahlol Lodi's son Barbak enthroned at Jaunpur. Mān Singh Parihār's accession at Gwalior.
- 1489      Accession of Sikander Lodi; of Nāsir-ud-dīn Mahmūd in Bengal; of Fath Shāh in Kashmir.
- 1490      Usurpation of Sidi Badr, Muzāffar Shāh, in Bengal.
- 1494      Husain Shāh of Jaunpur expelled by Sikander Lodi.
- 1497      Restoration of Muhammad Shāh in Kashmir.
- 1498      Restoration of Fath Shāh in Kashmir.
- 1500      Accession of Nāsir-ud-dīn in Mālwa.
- 1502      Accession of Mahmūd in Multan.
- 1503      Nāsir-ud-dīn of Mālwa invades Rajputāna.
- 1504      Bābur becomes king of Kabul; raids Indian frontier. Yusuf Adil Shāh expelled from Bijapur for trying to impose Shiah religion.

- 1505 Sikander Lodi's campaign in Gwalior.
- 1506 The Portuguese at Cochin.
- 1507 Bābur assumes title of Pādshāh at Kabul.
- 1509 Accession of Rāṇa Sanga and Krishnadeva Rāya.
- 1510 Accession of Ismail Adil Shāh. The Portuguese capture Goa. Krishnadeva Rāya annexes Raichur Doab.
- 1511 Death of Mahmūd Bégarha; accession of Muzāffar Shāh II in Gujarat; of Mahmūd II in Mālwa.
- 1512 Rajput domination and Muslim revolt in Mālwa.
- 1513 Sikander Lodi sends expedition to Mālwa.
- 1514 Mamūd II submits to Rajputs at Māndu. War among the Deccan Kingdoms.
- 1516 Rape of 140 Virgins by Muslims in Rajputāna.
- 1517 Accession of Ibrāhim Lodi; rebellion of Jalāl Khān.
- 1518 Accession of Nāsir-ud-din Nusrat Shāh in Bengal; Muzāffar II of Gujarat massacres Rajputs and restores Mahmūd II to Mālwa; Ibrāhim Lodi captures Gwalior.
- 1519 Rāṇa Sanga defeats and captures Mahmūd II of Mālwa at Gāgraun; Bābur's first two expeditions into India (Bhira).
- 1520 Bābur's third expedition into India (Sialkot).
- 1521 Muzāffar II of Gujarat and Mahmūd II of Mālwa invade Rāṇa Sanga's territory (siege of Mandasor). Luther at Diet of Worms; Ignatius Loyola wounded at Pampeluna.
- 1522 Final capture of Kandahār by Bābur; Shāh Beg Arghūn established in Sind.
- 1524 Bābur's fourth and fifth expeditions into India at Daulat Khān Lodi's invitation (Lahore and Dipālpur captured); Shāh Beg Arghūn succeeded by Shāh Husain in Sind.
- 1525 Deposition of Wali-ullāh and accession of Kaleem-ullāh last of the Bahmanis; war between Deccani kingdoms.
- 1526 Bābur's victory at Pānipat over Ibrāhim Lodi; deposition of Muhmmad Shāh and accession of Ibrāhim I in Kashmir; death of Muzāffar II of Gujarat, accession and assassination of Sikander, and accession of Bahādur Shāh I.
- 1527 Extinction of Bahmanis; Nāzūk Shāh's accession in Kashmir.
- 1528 The Portuguese reach Bengal.

## CHAPTER IX

### THIRD EMPIRE OF THE CRESCENT : MUGHAL

What we described as the First and Second Empires of the Crescent, in previous chapters, really constituted one single effort at Imperial rule made by the Turks. Even that proved abortive, as the Empire of the Khaljis and Tughlaks together did not last longer than a bare quarter century (1311-35 A.D.). A more real attempt in the same direction was made by the Mughals in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Mughal Empire in India was founded in 1526 by Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Bābur, who, according to all estimates, is one of the most fascinating personalities in all history. He spent the greater part of his life outside India, and though, as Lane-Poole says, his permanent place in history rests upon his Indian conquests, his earlier life ( of which he has left an imperishable record in his *Memoirs* ) constitutes an interest no less absorbing. ' Given such a man it would be sheer perversity to treat him solely in reference to the part he played in India, as this would be to deprive ourselves of no less than thirty-six years of the very best of company.'

#### *Bābur's Antecedents :*

Bābur was born in February 1483 and his *Memoirs* begin with the sentence—'In the month of Ramzān of the year 899 (Hegira), in the twelfth year of my age, I became ruler in the country of Farghāna.' He was descended, through his father Umar Sheikh, from Timūr, and through his mother Kutlug Nigar, from Chingiz Khān. Thus he combined in himself ' the ferocity of the Mongol, and the courage and capacity of the Turk.' To these inherited traits, Bābur also added the polished urbanity of his Persian nurture.

Farghāna, with Andijan as its capital, was Umar Sheikh's kingdom. It was a fertile tract of country on the Jagzartes, 50,000 sq. miles in extent (now Khokand in Russian Turkistan). But Bābur's father was not satisfied with this. So he quarrelled with his eldest brother, Ahmad Mirza, who had received the largest share of the paternal dominions, viz., Sāmārkand and Bokhāra. In the midst of these quarrels, however, Umar Sheikh died of an accidental fall, while

feeding his pigeons (8 June 1494). This fatal event synchronised with the invasion of Farghāna by Bābur's paternal and maternal uncles, Ahmad and Mahmūd Mirza, respectively. Though Bābur was hardly twelve years of age at that time, he was saved from the critical situation by the loyalty of his subjects. He gratefully records : 'They (i.e. his enemies) found in our soldiers and peasantry a resolution and single-mindedness such as would not let them flinch from making offering of their lives so long as there was breath and power in their bodies.'

Sāmārkand, the city of Timūr, (then ruled by his uncle Ahmad Mirza) exercised the greatest fascination over the ambitious son of Umar Sheikh. It was to the west of Farghāna, a city five miles in circuit, noted for its learning, and possessed of a great astronomical observatory (built by Ulugh Beg), and had celebrated colleges, baths and mosques. According to Bābur, 'even the baker's shops (of Sāmārkand) are excellent and the cooks are skilful.' In July 1494, when Ahmad Mirza died, Bābur set his heart upon the conquest of Sāmārkand, though he could not make his first effort until July 1496, and even then not successfully. But this attempt marked an important stage in Bābur's life. Next year (1497), though only for a while, Bābur succeeded in his ambition. He captured Sāmārkand and kept it for a hundred days. Then there was rebellion in Farghāna which cost him both the kingdoms : 'Thus for the sake of Farghāna I had given up Sāmārkand, and now found I had lost the one without securing the other'.

After this Bābur became a wanderer for two years. As he himself put it, ever since he was eleven years of age, he 'never spent two festivals of the Ramzān, in the same place'; or, in the words of Ferishta, 'the football of fortune, like a king on a chess-board, he moved about from place to place buffeted about like a pebble on the sea-shore.' But wherever he went, Bābur was always cheerful, always kindly, always ready to enjoy the beauties of nature,—especially 'a wonderful, delicate, and toothsome melon with a mottled skin like shagreen'. In 1498 he won Farghāna back, though he had to lose it again in 1500, because of an attempt to restrain his greedy 'Mughal rascals' from plundering. 'It was a senseless thing,' he writes, 'to exasperate so many men with arms in their hands. *In war and in state-craft a thing may seem reasonable at first sight, but it needs to be weighed and considered in a hundred lights before it is finally decided upon.* This ill-judged order of mine was, in fact, the ultimate cause of my



second expulsion'. Once more, therefore, he had to seek refuge 'by dangerous tracks among rocks. In the steep and narrow ways and gorges which we had to climb, many a horse and camel dropped and fell out..... We passed on, nevertheless, with incredible labour, through fearful gorges and tremendous precipices, until after a hundred agonies and losses, at last we topped those murderous steep defiles and came down on the borders of Kān, with its lovely expanse of lake'.

During 1500-1 he captured Sāmārkand for a second time, married his cousin Āyesha, had by her a daughter, 'who in a month or forty days went to partake of the mercy of God.' After this they parted : for, 'as my affections decreased, my shyness increased.' Soon, Bābur was defeated by Shaibāni, the Uzbek leader at Sar-i-pūl (Bridge Head), and again driven out of Sāmārkand within eight months. From 1502-4 he was once more a fugitive, with a following of only 'more than 200 and less than 300 men with clubs in their hands and tattered clothes on their backs.' In a garden he was once awaiting death, 'but soon found life and fortune.' The kingly blood in him carved out a kingdom at Kabul, in 1504.

'It was in the last ten days of the second Rabi (October 1504) that without a fight, without an effort, by Almighty God's bounty and mercy, I obtained and made subject to me Kabul and Ghazni and their dependent districts.' Here Bābur assumed, in 1507, the title of *Pādshāh* or Emperor, which had never been borne by any Timūrid before him : 'Up to that date people had styled Timūr Beg's descendants *Mirza* even when they were ruling ; now I ordered that people should style me *Pādshāh*.' The same year (1507) Bābur conquered Kandahār and bestowed it upon his younger brother Nāsir, who, however, soon lost it within a week. It was not reconquered finally until fifteen years later.

Bābur still yearned for Sāmārkand. This year (1507), also, he paid a visit to his cousins in Herat which was 'the home of culture and ease.' 'In the whole habitable world,' writes Bābur, 'there is not such another city'. But his object in going there was to see if he could secure their help in making yet another effort against Shaibāni. But he soon realised that 'the brave barbarian from the north' was not to be vanquished by men like these. The Mirzas, although accomplished and having a charming talent for conversation and society, 'possessed no knowledge whatever of the conduct of a campaign or of warlike operations, and were perfect strangers to the preparations for a battle, and the dangers and spirit of a soldier's life.'

On his way back, Bābur met with 'such suffering and hardships as I had scarcely endured at any other time of my life.' Nevertheless, in 1511-12, he had the satisfaction of winning Sāmārkand, Bokhāra and Khurāsān, for the last time, with the help of Shāh Ismael Safavi of Persia. In October 1511, Bābur re-entered Sāmārkand 'in the midst of such pomp and splendour as no one has ever seen or heard of before or ever since.' Bābur's dominions now reached their widest extent : from Tāshkhend and Sairām on the borders of the deserts of Tartary, to Kabul and Ghazni near the Indian frontier, including Sāmārkand, Bokhāra, Hisar, Kunduz and Farghāna. But this glory was as shortlived as it was great. After flying from one part of his dominions to another, losing everywhere, he returned to Kābul in 1513-14.

The Shāh exacted from him a very heavy price : Bābur was to hold those kingdoms under the Shāh ; he was also to become a convert to the *Shiah* faith and adopt all its symbols, as well as enforce the *Shiah* creed on the orthodox *Sunni* subjects of the conquered kingdom. Though Bābur refused to persecute anybody for his religious faith, his own conversion led to his fall. *With this last discomfiture in the north and west, the first period of Bābur's life comes to a close ; after this he definitely turned to the south and east, viz., India.* Although he continued to sit on the throne of Kabul for another twelve years, the history of the period 1514-25 is of little interest to the student of Indian History, except in its bearing on Bābur's Indian expeditions, to which we must now turn. 'Kabul,' writes Bābur, 'is the intermediate point between Hindustan and Khurāsān'. "Bābur", as Lane-Poole has said, "is the link between Central Asia and India, between predatory hordes and imperial government, between Tamerlane and Akbar."

#### *Towards Hindustan :*

'The great advantage of Hindustan,' Bābur was aware, 'besides its vast extent of territory, is the amount of gold, coined and uncoined, which may be found there'. To Hindustan, therefore, he turned his wistful eyes when, after the conquest of Kābul, he felt the need for supplies. (1) In 1504, he marched along the Peshāwar-Attok road, went through the Khyber, and then instead of crossing the river Indus, marched on Kohat. Here he found much booty which he seized. (2) In September, 1507, he resolved, after some discussion, to march

in the direction of Hindustan. So, placing a cousin in charge of Kabul, he came as far as Adināpur (now Jalālābad), fighting his way among the Afghans and vainly attempting to subdue those 'robbers and plunderers even in time of peace.' The retreat of Shaibāni emboldened Bābur to return to his capital; and once more the advance into India was postponed. (3) Some time between 1514 and 1519 Bābur profiting by the example of Shāh Ismael, determined to possess an effective artillery and secured the services of an Ottoman Turk named Ustād Āli, who became his Master of Ordnance. Between 1520 and 1525, likewise, he secured another Turkish expert named Mustafa, for the same purpose. These were clear indications of Bābur's effective preparations for the intended conquest of India. "If there was one single material factor, which more than any other conduced to his ultimate triumph in Hindustan," writes Mr. Rushbrook-Williams, "it was his powerful artillery." (4) Bābur, again, in 1518, attempted reduction of the tribes and fortresses on the north-east of Kabul, as a preliminary to the conquest of Hindustan.

#### *Five Expeditions :*

The urge for definite conquest, however, came to him from one of his nobles who said, 'Go on then and possess yourself of the noblest country in the universe. Establish beyond the river Indus the Empire which your fathers have marked out for you. Go and fix your Court in the centre of Hindustan and prefer the delights of the Indies to the hoar and snow of Tartary. Everything seems to invite you to the south. Providence has conducted you to Kabul and put you on the road to Hindustan. God and Muhammad engage you to extinguish the idolatry of the Indians'. The effect of this on Bābur is best summed up in what he himself wrote after the battle of Pānipat :—

'From the year 910 Hijra, when I obtained the principality of Kabul, up to the date of the events I now record, I had never ceased to think of the conquest of Hindustan. But I had never found a suitable opportunity for undertaking it, hindered as I was, sometimes by the apprehensions of my *Begs*, sometimes by disagreements between my brothers and myself. Finally, all these obstacles were happily removed. Great and small, *Begs* and captains, no one dared say a word against the project. So, in 925 Hijra (1519 A.D.) I left at the head of an army, and made a start by taking Bajaur.....From this time to 932 Hijra (1526 A.D.) I was always actively concerned in the affairs of Hindustan. I went there in person, at the head of an army, five times in the course of seven or eight years. The fifth time, by the munificence and liberality of God, there fell beneath my blows an enemy as formidable as Sultan Ibrāhīm and I gained the vast Empire of Hindustan'.

**First Expedition :** In 1519 he stormed Bajaur which fell after a spirited struggle in which Bābur's new artillery played a decisive part. 'By the favour and pleasure of the High God, this strong and mighty fort was taken in two or three hours; matching the fort were the utter struggle and effort of our braves; distinguish themselves they did, and won the name and fame of heroes'. Bābur looked upon this as the first step on the road to Hindustan. If here he indulged in wholesale massacre, it was only to make an example. When he proceeded further to Bhīra, on the Jhelum, he acted with great restraint: 'As it was always in my heart to possess Hindustan, and as these several countries had once been held by the Turks, I pictured them as my own, and was resolved to get them into my own hands, whether peacefully or by force. For these reasons, it being imperative to treat the hill-men well, this order was given: *Do no hurt or harm to the flocks and herds of these people, nor even to their cotton-ends and broken needles.*'

He then despatched Mullah Murshid to Sultan Ibrāhīm 'giving him the name and style of ambassador, to demand that the countries which from old times had belonged to the Turks should be given up to me.' The Mullah was also given letters for Daulat Khān, governor of the Punjab. But the people of Hindustan, and particularly the Afghans, writes Bābur, 'are a strangely foolish and senseless race.' Mullah Murshid was detained some time in Lahore, so that 'my envoy, five months after, returned to Kabul without having received any answer.' Bābur quitted India, leaving Bhīra in the charge of Hindu Beg, but the latter was soon expelled by the natives.

**Second Expedition:** The same year, in September 1519, Bābur again marched through the Khyber, in order to subdue the Yusufzai and provision Peshāwar fort as a base for future operations in Hindustan. But he was recalled by disturbing news from Badakhshān, which came into Bābur's possession in 1520.

**Third Expedition :** For the third time Bābur marched, in 1520, through Bajaur towards Bhīra. Subduing the recalcitrant Afghan tribes on the way, he proceeded to Sialkot, which submitted without striking a blow. The people of Saiyidpūr defied Bābur, but were easily subdued. However, Bābur had to hastily retrace his steps again to fight Shāh Beg Arghūn, ruler of Kandahār. After two unsuccessful efforts, Bābur finally acquired Kandahār, in 1522, through the treachery of its governor, Maulāna Abdul Bāgi. Shāh Beg estab-

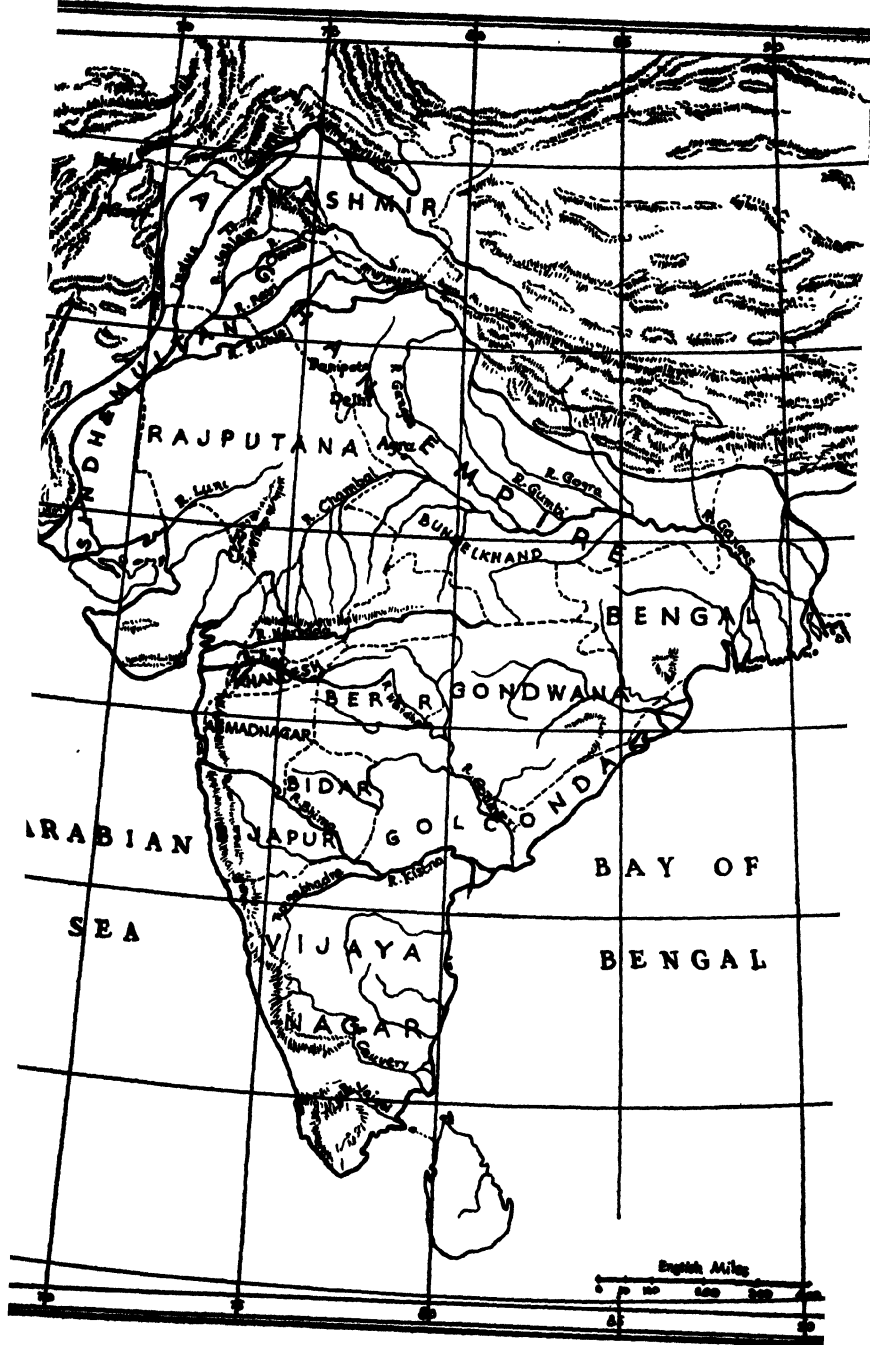
lished himself in Sind, and Kāmraṇ (Bābur's second son) was put in charge of Kandahār.

*Fourth Expedition:* Thus, thoroughly secure at home, Bābur for the fourth time invaded India, in 1524. Daulat Khān, governor of the Punjab, was growing very powerful. Sultan Ibrāhīm had summoned him to Delhi. But Daulat Khān offended him by not appearing in person. To protect himself from the Sultan's wrath, Daulat Khān sent his son Dilāwar Khān, to invite Bābur to dethrone Ibrāhīm Lodi in favour of his uncle Ālam Khān (or Alā-ud-dīn). Bābur readily fell in with this invitation, and marched once more into the valleys of the Jhelum and the Chenab. Lahore and Dipālpur soon fell into his hands. Daulat Khān was defeated by the Delhi forces and driven into exile. But he came back and sought reinstatement at the hands of the invader. Bābur, however, offered him only Jalandhar and Sultānpur instead. Daulat Khān felt disappointed, and the fiefs were bestowed upon his more reliable son Dilāwar Khān. Dipālpur was given to Ālam Khān. Daulat Khān and his second son, Ghāzī Khān, fled to the hills, only to return in the wake of Bābur's withdrawal. They recaptured Sultānpur from Dilāwar, and Dipālpur from Ālam Khān. Ibrāhīm's attempt to subdue Daulat Khān proved unsuccessful. But Bābur's Lahore detachment inflicted a defeat upon him. On account of this unsettled state, Ālam Khān fled to Kabul and once again sought Bābur's aid to seat himself on the throne of Delhi. In return Bābur was promised sovereignty over Lahore and west Punjab. Ālam Khān returned to India with this understanding. But the wily Daulat won him over. The two Khāns accordingly marched on Delhi, only to be disgracefully routed by the Sultan.

*Fifth Expedition:* Bābur now crossed the frontier for the last time (November 1525), with the largest army he had ever led into Hindustan. Humāyun was with him with a contingent from Badakhshān. On crossing the Jhelum, the Lahore army also joined him. All told, his following numbered not more than 12,000, of whom perhaps only 8,000 were effectives. Sialkot had been lost and the generals in India had gathered together at Lahore. But Daulat Khān alone had taken the field with not less than 40,000 men. Ibrāhīm Lodi was soon to confront him with 1,00,000 men and a large number of war-elephants. However, Daulat Khān's forces melted away at Bābur's mere approach. On 26 February 1526, Humāyun won his spurs for the first time against an advance division of the Imperial forces. Ibrāhīm was coming from Delhi, and Bābur from Sirhind and Ambāla. On 1st



1A: *The Crescent in India.*



April, again, Babur's men encountered a cavalry division of the Sultan and crushed it. From 12 to 19 April, one whole week, the two armies faced each other, with little action, near Pānīpat—'the plain intended by Nature to be the battlefield of nations.'

### *First Battle of Pānīpat :*

The battle was fought on 21 April 1526. "On one side were the courage of despair, and something of the resources of scientific warfare; on the other side, men-at-arms of the medieval type, with crowded ranks of spear-men and archers thronging on in fool-hardy disorder." On 19 April, a night attack by Bābur's men failed, and following this there was a scare among Bābur's men. The Imperial army, emboldened by the unimpressive conduct of the enemy, forged ahead. Owing to its large numbers, it had to converge suddenly: the wide front collapsed in confusion in re-adjusting itself before Bābur's narrower entrenched position. A keen master of strategy, Bābur at once had recourse to his traditional tactics of *Tulghma* and simultaneous artillery action. The Mughals surrounded the Indians on all sides and attacked, routed and slaughtered. Seldom was a day 'so fought, so followed, so fairly won.'

'The sun had mounted spear-high when the onset began and the battle lasted till mid-day, when the enemy were completely broken and routed, and my people victorious and triumphant. By the grace and mercy of Almighty God this difficult affair was made easy to me, and that mighty army, in the course of half a day, was laid in the dust.'

*The Results:* Ibrāhim lay dead on the field, together with Bikram, the Hindu Rāja of Gwalior, "who had joined the Muslim Sultan in defence of their common country." 6,000 corpses were counted near where the Sultan was found dead; 15,000 or 16,000 had died in different parts of the field. 'On reaching Agra, we found from the accounts of the natives of Hindustan, that 40,000 or 50,000 men had fallen in the field.' 'The land simply changed masters after one supreme effort.' 'To the Afghans of Delhi the battle of Pānīpat was their Cannae. It was the ruin of their dominion, the end of their power.' *The battle of Pānīpat marks the end of the second stage in Bābur's conquest of Hindustan.*

Ibrāhim Lodi, though not lacking in personal valour, was, in Bābur's own estimation, 'an inexperienced young man careless in his movements, who marched without order, halted or retired without method and engaged without foresight.' The week when the two



armies lay facing each other, went in Bābur's favour: it gave his men time to regain their self-confidence. The Delhi army had come up too precipitately without a halt from the start. It was not disciplined enough for orderly re-adjustments to given situations. A sudden attempt in this direction threw its vast numbers into utter confusion. Bābur was, on the contrary, a tried and resourceful commander, and his veterans were seasoned and disciplined warriors. "His men began the battle in no small alarm: it was their Emperor's cool science and watchful tactics that restored their confidence and gave them back their pluck." Ibrāhim's war-elephants and vast numbers were more a source of weakness than strength against Bābur's scientific combination of cavalry and artillery.

*The sequel:* After the victory, Bābur at once despatched Humāyun with Khwāja Kalan to Agra, and another party to take charge of the forts and treasures of Delhi. On Friday, 27 April, the *Khutbah* was read in his name at the capital. Marching with the main army, Bābur halted on the Jamuna, opposite Delhi, in order to visit the tombs of Muslim saints and heroes. 'On Thursday, the 28th Rajab, (10th May), about the hour of afternoon prayers I entered Agra and took up my residence in Sultan Ibrāhim's palace.' Here Bābur received from Humāyun, among other treasures, a diamond (Koh-i-noor?) valued at half the daily expenditure of the whole world.' But the father, in generous recognition of his son's services, presented it to Humāyun together with other gifts worth 70,00,000 *dāms* (£20,000). A *pargana* of the value of seven *lacs* was bestowed on Ibrāhim's mother. *Parganas* were also given to each of her *Amirs*. She was conducted with all her effects to a palace, which was assigned for her residence, about a *kos* below Agra. His *Begs* received six to ten *lacs* each (£1,700 to £ 2,800). Every soldier got his share of the booty. Even traders and camp-followers were not forgotten in the distribution, including those who were absent. Friends in Farghāna, Khurāsān, Kāshghar, and Persia, were surprised with gifts of gold and silver, cloth and jewels, and captive slaves. Holy men in Herat, Sāmārkand, Mecca, and Medina, got their offerings; and every person in Kabul, man, woman, slave or free, young and old, received a silver coin as a memento of the victory. The balance was stored up in the vaults of the capital for the support of the army and administration.

#### *Post-Pānīpat Problems:*

*The Afghans:* 'When I first arrived in Agra, there was a strong

mutual dislike and hostility between my people and the men of the place. The peasantry and soldiers of the country avoided and fled from my men. Afterwards, everywhere, except only in Delhi and Agra, the inhabitants fortified different posts, while the governors of towns put their fortifications in a posture of defence, and refused to submit or obey.' The nature of the situation he was confronted with, after his victory at Pānīpat, is best described in his own words:—

(a) Kāsim Sāmbhālī, was in Sāmbhāl, (b) Nizām Khān in Bayāna, (c) the Rājā Hasan Khān Mewātī himself in Mewāt. 'That infidel was the prime mover and agitator in all these confusions and insurrections.' (d) Kanauj, with the whole country beyond the Ganges, was entirely in the possession of refractory Afghans, such as Nāsir Khān Lohānī, Ma'ruf Farmulī, and a number of other *Amirs* who had been in a state of open rebellion for two years before the death of Ibrāhīm.

'At the period I defeated that prince, they had overrun, and were in possession of Kanauj and the country in that quarter, and had advanced and encamped two or three marches on this side of Kanauj. They elected Bihār Khān (or Bahādūr Khān), the son of Daryā Khān, as their king, and gave him the name of Sultan Mahmūd. When I came to Agra we could not find grain or provender, either for ourselves or for our horses. The villagers, out of hostility for us, had taken to rebellion, thieving, and robbery. The roads became impassable.

'I had not time, after the division of treasure, to send proper persons to occupy and protect the different *parganas* and stations.' To make matters worse, the heat was abnormal that year, and many of Bābur's men dropped down dead. Not a few of his *Begs* and best men began to lose heart, objected to remaining in Hindustan, and even began to make preparations for retreat. 'I no sooner heard this murmuring among my troops, than I summoned all my *Begs* to a council. I told them that, by Divine power, I had routed my formidable enemy and achieved the conquest of the numerous provinces and kingdoms which we at present held. And now, what force compels, and what hardship obliges us, without any visible cause, after having worn out our life in accomplishing the desired achievement, to abandon and fly from our conquests and to retreat back to Kabul with every symptom of disappointment and discomfiture? "Let not any one who calls himself my friend, ever henceforward make such a proposal. But if there is any one among you who cannot bring himself to stay, or give up his purpose of returning back, let him depart." Having made this fair and reasonable proposal, the discontented were of necessity compelled, however unwillingly, to renounce their seditious purposes.'

The final subjugation of the Afghans had to be deferred in the face of a more formidable foe.

*The Rajputs:* Rājā Sangrām Singh of Mewar, popularly known as Rājā Sanga, and Medini Rāi of Chānderi, were two tough warriors under whose leadership the Rajputs had determined to drive out the

insolent invader. The fact that Muslims like Hasan Khān Mewāti, and Sultan Mahmūd Lodi (brother of Ibrāhīm Lodi) had joined with the Rāna, made it appear that it was not a war of the Hindus against the Muhammadans but a united national effort against a common enemy of the country. Ahmad Yadgar, in his *Tarikh-i-Salat-i-Afghana*, writes :

'Rāna Sanga who was at that time a powerful chief sent a message to Hasan Khān saying, "The Mughals have entered Hindustan, have slain Sultan Ibrāhīm, and taken possession of the country ; it is evident that they will likewise send an army against both of us ; if you will side with me we will be alive, and not suffer them to take possession."

But Bābur himself looked upon this only as a holy war against the infidels with whom had joined some Muslim apostates. This is indicated by his assumption of the title of *Ghāzī* after the victory : 'I used the epithet of *Ghāzī*, in the Imperial titles.' This was necessary to arouse his dispirited and home-sick followers. 'A general consternation and alarm prevailed among great and small. There was not a single person who uttered a manly word, nor an individual who delivered a manly opinion. The *Wazirs*, whose duty it was to give good counsel, and the *Amirs* who enjoyed the wealth of kingdoms, neither spoke bravely, nor was their counsel or deportment such as became men of firmness.' Preliminary skirmishes only confirmed the apprehensions of Bābur's men who had heard disconcerting stories of Rajput valour. Bābur, as Lane-Poole points out, "was now to meet warriors of a higher type than any he had encountered. The Rajputs, energetic, chivalrous, fond of battle and bloodshed, animated by a strong national spirit, were ready to meet face to face the boldest veterans of the camp, and were at all times prepared to lay down their life for their honour." The forebodings of an astrologer, whom Bābur describes as an 'evil-minded rascally fellow,' made things appear more ominous. But Bābur rose equal to the situation, as always he had done :

'On Monday, the 23rd of the first Jumada, I had mounted to survey my posts, and, in the course of my ride, was seriously struck with the reflection that I had always resolved one time after another to make effectual repentance.' He had been a confirmed toper like Masūd of Ghazni ; now he determined to renounce wine forever. So 'having sent for the gold and silver goblets and cups, with all the other utensils used for drinking parties, I directed them to be broken, and renounced the use of wine, purifying my mind. The fragments of the goblets, etc. I directed to be divided among the *dervishes* and the poor.' Salt was thrown into the store of wine just received from Ghazni ; all the rest found in the camp was poured upon the ground ; and a well was ordered to be dug, and an almshouse

built on the spot, to commemorate this great religious event. As a boon to his Muhammadan followers and subjects, he gave up the *temgha* or stamp-tax in all his dominions so far as Muslims were concerned. To stiffen the sinews, and summon up the blood of his men, Bābur also made a stirring appeal to them in the following words:—

“Noblemen and soldiers! Every man that comes into this world is subject to dissolution..... How much better is it to die with honour than to live with infamy..... God Most High has been gracious in giving us this destiny, that if we fall we die martyrs, if we conquer we triumph in His Holy Cause. Let us swear with one accord that, by the Great Name of God, we will never turn back from such a death, or shrink from the stress of battle, till our souls are parted from our bodies.”

To suit the action to his words, on New Year's Day (12 March 1527), ‘they took a number of pagans and cut off their heads, which they brought in ..... This raised the spirits of the army wonderfully, and gave them confidence. They swore by the divorce of their wives, and on the Holy Book’; they recited the *fatiha* and said, “O King! God willing, we will not spare ourselves in sacrifice and devotion, so long as breath and life are in our bodies.”

*Jihād*: Bābur declared *Jihād* or holy war on the infidel, on 11 February 1527. The justification for it is given in the following statements:—

(i) ‘Although Rāṇa Sanka, the Pagan, when I was in Kabul, had sent me an ambassador with professions of attachment, and had arranged with me, that, if I would march from that quarter into the vicinity of Delhi, he would march from the other side upon Agra; yet, when I defeated Ibrāhim, and took Delhi and Agra, the Pagan, during all my operations, did not make a single movement.’ (ii) On the other hand, the Rāṇa also complained of broken faith; and, in particular claimed Kālpi, Dholpur, Bayāna, as well as Agra—all of which had been occupied by Bābur. (iii) Rāṇa Sanga, having reduced Nizām Khān of Bayāna to great extremities, that chief sent a deputation to Bābur, requesting his aid, for which he was ready to pay him due homage. Bābur did not hesitate to accept his allegiance, and sending a force to expel Sanga, confirmed the Khān in possession of Bayāna, which was settled upon him, with all its dependencies, in consideration of his paying an annual tribute of twenty *lacs* of rupees.

The two armies met at Kanua (10 miles from Sikri; 20 from Agra) on Saturday, 16 March 1527. Bābur's arrangements were in the main similar to those at Pānipat, with this difference, that guns this time were mounted on wheeled tripods to facilitate movement. A special feature in the disposition was also the great strength of the

reserve. Bābur in person led the centre, Humāyun was on the right, and Mahdi Khwāja (Bābur's brother-in-law?) on the left. The effectives on the Rajput side, no doubt, outnumbered their antagonists by seven or eight to one; and, although Bābur's army on this occasion was greater than the one he had commanded at Pānipat, "the depression and vacillation which the Pādshāh was at pains to overcome proves that the average morale was not so good".

*The Results:* The victory of Bābur, was nevertheless, final and complete. 'Hardly a clan of the Rajputs was there but had lost the flower of its princely blood.' Rāṇa Sanga himself escaped badly wounded. The heads of the gallant Rajputs (who had been 'sent to hell') were built into a ghastly tower, and Bābur, as previously stated assumed the title of *Ghāzī* or victor in holy war.

The consequences of the battle of Kanua were most momentous: (i) The menace of Rajput supremacy, which had loomed large before the eyes of the Muhammadans in India for the last ten years, was removed once for all. (ii) The Mughal Empire in India was now firmly established. In the words of R. Williams, "Bābur had definitely seated himself upon the throne of Sultan Ibrāhīm and the sign and seal of his achievement had been the annihilation of Sultan Ibrāhīm's most formidable antagonists. *Hitherto the occupation of Hindustan might have been looked upon as an episode in Babur's career of adventure: but from henceforth it became the keynote of his activities for the remainder of his life.* His days of wandering in search of a fortune are now passed away: the fortune is his, and he has but to show himself worthy of it. And it is significant of the new stage in his career which this battle marks that never afterwards does he have to stake his throne and life upon the issue of a stricken field. Fighting there is, and fighting in plenty, to be done; but fighting for the extension of his power, for the reduction of rebels, for the ordering of his kingdom. It is never fighting for his throne." (iv) "It is also significant," he further observes, "of Bābur's grasp of vital issues that from henceforth *the centre of gravity of his power is shifted from Kabul to Hindustan...* He resolutely remained in India for the rest of his days, fighting, governing, administering, striving to put all things upon a sound basis ere death called him away." (v) Within a year Bābur had struck two decisive blows which shattered the power of two great organised forces: the battle of Pānipat had utterly broken the Afghan power in India; the battle of Kanua (also called Sikri) crushed the great Rajput Confederacy.

*Reduction of Rebels* : Bābur commissioned his officers to subjugate the rest of the country, and sent them in various directions with small forces to help them. "These little bands fought with utmost zeal, conscious that they were making their own fortunes, while at the same time the territories thus acquired represented an extension of the dominions of their master."

Humāyun conquered Sāmbhal, Jaunpur, Ghāzipur, and Kālpi; Muhammad Ali Jang-Jang captured Rabiri; Mahdi Khwāja subdued Etāwah; Kanauj was taken by Sultan Muhammad Duldari; and Dholpur by Sultan Junaid Barlas. Sheikh Guren of Kol (Doab) was won over by promise of protection; Sheikh Bāyazid—an important lieutenant of the Lodi king—was granted a *jagir* worth a *crore* of rupees in Oudh. Bayāna and Gwalior had rallied round Bābur for fear of the Rajputs; and the Lohāni and Farmuli chiefs, who had championed the cause of Sultan Mahmūd, melted away before Bābur's concentration of forces. Hasan Khān Mewāti died on the field of Kanua.

When Bābur felt his grip on Hindustan sure beyond doubt, he sent back Humāyun to Badakhshān, and other important officers to other parts of his dominions outside India. Kandahār, ever since its final conquest in 1522, was in Kāmran's charge. Khwāja Kalan, Bābur's old general, had been sent to Ghazni after the battle of Pānipat. Askari was established in Multan when it was conquered in 1527. Hindāl was at Kābul.

In February 1529, Bābur wrote to Khwāja Kalan in Afghanistan: 'The affairs of Hindustan have at length been brought to some degree of order, and I trust in Almighty God that the time is near at hand when, through His favour, everything will be quite settled here'. But after the battle of Kanua, and before Bābur could realise the hope here expressed, there were at least three more enemies left to overcome :—

1. *Maidāni Kāi of Chānderi* : 'On Monday the 14th of the first Rabi, (9 Dec. 1527) I set out in pursuance of a vow, on a holy war against Chānderi (near Bhopal).....Chānderi had formerly belonged to the Sultans of Māndu..... When Rāṇa Sanka advanced with an army against Ibrāhīm as far as Dholpur, that prince's *Amirs* rose against him and on that occasion Chānderi fell into Sanka's hands. He bestowed it on one Maidāni Rāi, a Pagan of great consequence, who was now in the place with 4000 or 5000 Pagans.....I sent to him to assure him of my favour and clemency, and offering him Shamsābad in exchange for Chānderi. Two or three considerable people about him were averse to conciliation,.....and the treaty broke off without success.....So, the

citadel was attacked on all sides.....Some of our troops were attacked furiously, and put to the sword. The reason for this desperate sally from their works was, that, on giving up the place for lost, they put to death the whole of their wives and women, and, having resolved to perish, had stripped themselves naked, in which condition they had rushed out to the fight; and engaging with ungovernable desperation, drove our people along the ramparts. Two or three hundred Pagans had entered Maidāni Rāi's house, where numbers of them slew each other. In this way *many went to hell*; and by the favour of God, in the space of two or three *gharis*, I gained this celebrated fort, without raising my standard, or beating my kettle-drum, and without using the whole strength of my arms. On the top of a hill to the north-west of Chānderi, *I erected a tower of the heads of Pagans.....*I gave Chānderi, to Ahmad Shāh, the grandson of Sultan Nāsir-ud-din, and fixed a revenue of fifty *lacs* to be paid from it to the Imperial treasury.' We also learn from Ahmad Yadgar: 'So much plunder was taken from that heathen army' by the *Amirs* 'that the King's troops obtained sufficient to support them for years.'

2. *Afghan Rebels*: On 2 February 1528, Bābur set out to punish the Afghan rebels who had advanced from Bihar into the Doab, stormed Shamsābad, and driven the Imperial garrison out of Kanauj. At Bābur's approach, the enemy crossed the river Ganges and mustered on its left bank to dispute Bābur's passage. The Emperor reached the great river, on 27 February, built a bridge across its broad stream, by 13 March, put the insurgents to headlong flight, and hotly pursued them as far as Oudh. After this Bābur returned to Agra for the rainy season.

'On Thursday, the 3rd of the first Jumada, I received letters which contained intelligence that Mahmūd, the son of Iskandar, had taken Bihar. On Thursday the 17th, we marched eight *kos*, and halted at Dakdaki, a *pargana* of Kara, on the banks of the Ganges.....While in this neighbourhood, intelligence reached us in rapid succession, that Sultan Mahmūd had gathered round him 100,000 Afghans, and was moving upon Chunar; that Sher Khān Sūr, on whom I had bestowed marks of favour, to whom I had given several *parganas*, and whom I left in command in that quarter, had now joined these Afghans.....On the 24th.....it appeared that the rebels had come and laid siege to Chunar, but that on getting the certain news of my approach, they were filled with consternation, broke up in confusion and raised the siege.'

3. *Nusrat Shāh of Bengal*: After this the rebels sought refuge in Bengal. 'As I was at peace with Bengal, and had always been the first to enter into any understanding that had a tendency to confirm a friendly state of things,' Bābur started negotiations with Nusrat Shāh, the ruler of Bengal. Failing in this, he sent an ultimatum: 'If he refused to leave the passage open, and neglected to listen to the remonstrances which I made, then whatever evil fell on his head, he must regard that as proceeding from his own act; and he would

have himself only to blame for any unpleasant circumstance that occurred.'

On 6 May 1529, the issue was decided finally at the battle of the Gogra (Buxār). The result was disastrous to the Bengalis: 'The Bengalis are famous for their skill in artillery. On this occasion we had a good opportunity of observing them. They do not direct their fire against a particular point, but discharge at random'. On Bābur's side, "the movement was brilliantly carried out in the face of a determined resistance. Attacked in front and rear and flank, the enemy broke and fled. Good generalship had once more guided valour to victory." A treaty of peace was concluded with Bengal, according to which each party was to respect the sovereignty of the other and neither party was to shelter or support the other's enemies. Sheikh Bāyazid, who had throughout sided with the rebels once more attacked Lucknow, but could not hold on for long.

'It appeared that on Saturday, the 12th of Ramzān, the enemy had made an attack, but could effect nothing. During the assault, some hay that had been collected, being set on fire by the fireworks, turpentine, and other combustibles that were thrown on it, the inside of the fort became as hot as an oven, and it was impossible to stand on the parapet, and consequently the fort was taken.' 'On the 18th Shawwal at midnight I reached the garden of *Hasht-bihisht* at Agra'.

#### *Bābur's Last Days :*

Bābur had very few days left to him now on this side of the grave. When everything was quite settled in Hindustan, he had written to Khwāja Kalan in Afghanistan, 'I shall set out for your quarters, God willing, without losing a moment. How can the delight of those lands ever be erased from the heart? How can one like me, who has vowed abstinence and purity of life, possibly forget the delicious melons and grapes of that happy land? The other day they brought me a musk-melon: as I cut it up I felt a deep homesickness, and sense of exile from my land, and I could not help weeping.' Accordingly, he even set out and went as far as Lahore, where he met his son Kāmrān. He was disappointed at Humāyun's failure against the Uzbeks. He had recalled Hindāl, his youngest son, from Kabul. The strain of his ceaseless campaigns, wanderings, and early drinking excesses, had told upon him rather heavily, despite his extraordinary energy and strength.

He had been known to take up a man under each arm, and run with them round the battlements of a fortress, leaping the embrasures; and even in



March 1529 he notes: 'I swam across the river Ganges for amusement. I counted my strokes, and found that I swam over in thirty-three strokes. I then took breath, and swam back to the other side. I had crossed by swimming every river I had met, except only the Ganges.' He was also perpetually in saddle, riding 80 miles a day sometimes, and the rapidity of his marches was often amazing.

He had even survived the poison administered to him by Ibrāhim Lodi's mother. Now his strength was on the decline; even his mental vigour seemed to have been affected. There was a plot to set aside Humāyun, in favour of Mir Muhammad Mahdi Khwāja (Bābur's sister's husband?). Humāyun received a timely warning, and hastened to Agra, which he reached on 27 June 1529, together with his mother. "If God should grant you the throne and crown," Bābur said to him, "do not put your brothers to death, but look sharply after them." In the summer of 1530 Humāyun fell dangerously ill. In this state he was carried from Sāmbhal to Delhi. Hearing of this, Bābur tenderly expressed to Māham, Humāyun's mother, "Although I have other sons, I love none as I love your Humāyun. I crave that this cherished child may have his heart's desire and live long, and I desire the kingdom for him because he has not his equal in distinction!" Every school-boy knows the story how Bābur bore away his son's illness and sacrificed himself in order to save Humāyun. As the latter recovered the former became worse; and after two or three months Bābur died (26 December 1530).

Just before this he had called his *Amirs* together and told them: "For years it has been in my heart to surrender my throne to Humāyun, and retire to the Gold-Scattering Garden. By the Divine Grace I have obtained in health all things but the fulfilment of this wish. Now, when I am laid low by illness, I charge you to acknowledge Humāyun as my successor, and to remain loyal to him. Be of one heart and mind towards him, and I hope to God that Humāyun will also bear himself well before men." Then turning to Humāyun he repeated his admonition to him regarding, in particular, the treatment of his brothers: "Humāyun, I commit to God's keeping you and your brothers and all my kinsfolk and your people and my people; and all of those I confide to you .....The cream of my testamentary direction is this: *Do nought against your brothers even though they may deserve it.*"

By his own desire, Babur's body was carried to Kabul and buried there in 'the sweetest spot' on a hill-side, amidst beloved surroundings, a cool-running stream and sweet-smelling flowers.

"Death makes no conquest of this Conqueror,  
For now he lives in Fame."

*Estimate of Bābur :*

V. A. Smith characterised Bābur as "the most brilliant Asiatic prince of his age, and worthy of a high place among the sovereigns of any age or country;" while Havell thought "His engaging personality, artistic temperament, and romantic career make him one of the most attractive figures in the history of Islam." 'In his person,' Ferishta wrote, 'Bābur was handsome, his address was engaging and unaffected, his countenance was pleasing, and his disposition affable. Last but not the least, Bābur's own cousin, Mirza Haidar, described him as 'adorned with various virtues and clad with numberless excellences, above all which towered bravery and humanity..... Indeed, no one of his family before him ever possessed such talents, nor any of his race perform such amazing exploits or experience such strange adventures.'

'In the composition of Turki poetry Bābur was second only to Amir Ali Shir. He has written a *divan* in the most lucid Turki. He invented a style of verse called *mubai-yan*, and was the author of a most useful treatise on jurisprudence which has been generally adopted. He also wrote an essay on Turki prosody, more elegant than any other.....Then there is his *Wakai*, or Turki *Memoirs*, written in simple, unaffected, yet pure style. He excelled in music and other arts.'

Bābur was undoubtedly a man of outstanding genius, a lover of fine arts, a born naturalist, a keen and critical observer of men and things, and an accomplished writer who immortalised himself, not merely as the founder of one of the most glorious dynasties that have ruled in India, but also as the prince of auto-biographers by bequeathing to posterity his delightful *Memoirs* which abound in descriptions of the countries he visited, their scenery, climate, productions, and works of art and industries, 'more full and accurate than will, perhaps, be found in equal space, in any modern traveller; and considering the circumstances in which they were compiled, truly surprising.' "No part of his character," Erskine has pointed out, "is more admirable than his uniform humanity and kindness of disposition. If, in the course of his *Memoirs* some cruel executions appear, they belong to the age, not to the man. The historians of his reign remark, that whenever any, either of his nobles or brothers, had revolted or entered into rebellion against him, no sooner did they acknowledge their offence and return to their duty than, to use the words of Khāfi Khān, contrary to the customs of the princes of Persia, Arabia, or India, he not only forgave them, but never retained

towards them any feeling of resentment." Bābur was eminently a man of faith. "Nothing happens," he used to say, "but by the will of God. Reposing ourselves on His protection, we must go forward." He attributed every bit of his success to the grace of the Almighty. After his victory over Ibrāhim, even before entering the capital, he reverently visited the tombs of the Muslim saints and heroes in the vicinity of Delhi. His glorious renunciation of wine before the battle of Kanua was an act of genuine repentance for his sins before God.

*Bābur as a General*: The history of Bābur that we have traced is nothing if it is not a record of brilliant generalship. Himself 'an admirable horseman, a fine shot, a good swordsman, and a mighty hunter,' Bābur was well calculated to catch the imagination of his soldiers. Besides these qualities, he possessed in an eminent degree the supreme virtues of a born leader of men. He enjoyed and suffered with his men, and thoroughly understood every man in his army, both officer and private.

In a noble passage in his *Memoirs* Bābur describes one of his early adventures. It is worthy of citation as throwing light upon his character as a leader of men :

'That night the storm was terrible, and snow fell so heavily that we all expected to die together. When we reached the mountain cave the storm was at its worst. We dismounted at its mouth. Deep snow ! a one-man road ! and even on that stamped-down and trampled road, pit-falls for horses ! The days at their shortest ! The first arrivals reached the cave by day-light, later they dismounted wherever they happened to be ; dawn found many still in the saddle. The cave secured was small. I took a shovel, and scraping and clearing the snow away made a place for myself as big as a prayer-carpet near its mouth. I dug down breast high, but did not reach the ground. This made me a little shelter from the wind when I sat right down in it. They begged me to go inside, but I would not. *I felt that for me to be in warm shelter and comfort whilst my men were out in the snow and drift, for me to be sleeping at ease inside, whilst my men were in misery and distress, was not a man's act, and far from comradeship. What strong men can stand, I would stand : for, as the Persian proverb says, "In the company of friends, Death is a nuptial feast."* So I remained in the snow and wind in the hole that I had dug out, with snow four-hands thick on my head and back and ears.'

But, where strictness was called for, Bābur never hesitated : Ferishta observes, 'He even used violence to prevent outrage' ; 'it is certain', he adds, 'his presence alone saved the honour of Daulat Khān's family, (when Bābur's men would have otherwise outraged it) Bābur preserved, by his exertions on this occasion, a fine library

collected by Ghāzī Khān (Daulat Khān's son), who was a poet and a man of learning.' Bābur himself records: 'Having learned that the troops had exercised some severities towards the inhabitants of Bahrah, and were using them ill, I sent out a party, who having seized a few of the soldiers that had been guilty of the excesses, I put some of them to death, and slit the noses of some others and had them led about the camp in that condition. As I reckoned the countries that had belonged to the Turks as my own territories, I admitted of no plundering or pillage.'

What is perhaps more necessary in a commander of armies, he correctly gauged both the strength and the weakness of the commanders and armies that were opposed to him. Above all, to his native courage he added the unbending tenacity of his will and the unquenchable fire of his ambition. 'Filled as I was by the ambition of conquest and broad sway,' he writes, 'one or two reverses could not make me sit down doing nothing.'

What though the field be lost,  
All is not lost—the unconquerable will,  
And courage never to submit or yield.

*Bābur as a Ruler*: The Empire of Bābur extended from Badakhshān to Bengal, from the Oxus to the Ganges: in India alone, from Bhira (Bahrah) in the west to Bihar in the east; from the Himalayas in the north to Chānderi in the South. But 'I had not time.....to send proper persons to occupy and protect the different *parganas* and stations.' Bābur was too much preoccupied with wars and conquests to devote any serious attention to the administrative organisation of his vast dominions. Having conquered, his primary consideration seemed to be to maintain his kingdom in peace and order. This, no doubt, he was well qualified to do with his military genius and efficient army. But to organise conquest and to organise administration are two different things; the latter calls for genius of an altogether different type. Sher Shāh and Akbar possessed this, but not Bābur.

To court danger and hardship, and show valour in arms; to shun indolence and ease, as unbecoming of a King; to consult *Begs* and ministers; to avoid private parties; to call the court to public levees twice every day; and to keep up the strength and discipline of the army—these were the principles he had inculcated upon Humāyun; and they seem to have nearly exhausted Bābur's kingly code. He was, no doubt, anxious to protect his subjects from the oppression

of free-booters, as is indicated by the following casual observation in his *Memoirs* :—

‘Every time that I have entered Hindustan, the Jats and Gujars have regularly poured down in prodigious numbers from their hills and wilds, in order to carry off oxen and buffaloes. These were the wretches that really inflicted the chief hardships, and were guilty of the severest oppression in the country. These districts (in the Punjab) in former times, had been in a state of revolt and yielded very little revenue that could be come at. On the present occasion, when I had reduced the whole of the neighbouring districts to subjection, they began to repeat their practices..... I sought out the persons guilty of these outrages, discovered them and ordered two or three of the number to be cut in pieces.’

Another instance of Bābur’s ruthlessness in putting down marauders is also recorded by Ahmad Yadgar : ‘When he reached Sirhind, one of the *Kāzis* of Samana complained to him that Mohan Mundahir had attacked his estate and burned it, plundered all his property, and slain his son. His Majesty, the Conqueror of the world, appointed Ali Kuli Hamadāni, with three thousand horse, to avenge the injury which the Mundahirs had done to the petitioner..... Nearly a thousand of the Mundahirs were killed, and a thousand men, women, and children taken prisoners. The slaughter was great, and there was a heap of severed heads ; and Mohan was taken alive. When the prisoners were brought to Delhi, all the women were given to the Mughals. The offending Mundahir was buried in the earth up to his waist, and then pierced to death with arrows. Such was the respect for the army which this produced amongst the people of Hind that thenceforth no one ventured either to rebel or disobey.’

Apart from this, he also did what was necessary, in order to ensure speedy communication between the principal parts of his dominions ; *e. g.*, he took care to maintain intact the Grand Trunk Road between Agra and Kabul, establishing a regular series of post-houses, at a distance of about fifteen miles from each other, and stationed relays of six horses and proper officers at each. Ferishta says, ‘Whenever he marched, he always caused roads to be measured after him, a custom which prevails among the Emperors of Hindustan to this day, and the statute he made concerning the measurement of distances has hitherto remained in force.... The *gaz Sikandari* or yard of Sikandar, which prevailed when he reached India was suspended by the *Bāburi gaz* which continued in use till the beginning of the reign of Jahāngeer Pādshāh.’

Being a man of high aesthetic tastes, Bābur also delighted in

creating beautiful *baghs* and buildings, aqueducts and bridges. 'In Agra alone,' he writes, 'I every day employed on my palaces 680 persons; and in Agra, Sikri, Bayāna, Dholpur, Gwalior, and Koil, there were every day employed on my works 1491 stone-cutters.' Ahmad Yadgar also informs us : 'In the second year of His Majesty's reign a beautiful garden was made on the borders of the river Jumna .....he passed his time in that garden, in company with Mughal companions and friends, in pleasure and enjoyment and carousing, in the presence of enchanting dancing-girls with rosy cheeks, who sang tunes, and displayed their accomplishments..... Mirza Kāmran also prepared a splendid garden similar to this in Lahore.'

Bābur had come to a country that was rich beyond the dreams of avarice. 'The chief excellency of Hindustan,' he noted, 'is that it is a large country, and has abundance of gold and silver.' This brought him a large revenue, utilising the old machinery of collection, and no new organisation of Bābur's creation. So, 'the countries from Bahrah to Bihar, which are now under my dominion, yield a revenue of 52 *crores* (*tankās*), as will appear from the particular and detailed statement.\* Of this amount, *parganas* to the value of 8 or 9 *crores* are in the possession of some *Rāis* or *Rājas*, who from old times have been submissive, and have received these *parganas* for the purpose of confirming them in their obedience.'

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"Everything considered," Erskine reckoned "£4,212,000 as the amount of Bābur's nominal revenue; a very large sum when the working of the American mines had not yet produced its full effect." Thomas's estimate was 2,60,00,000 silver *tankās* or £2,600,000. Here it may also be pointed out that Bābur was responsible for the introduction of anonymous coinage in India: "The practice of striking coin in subordinate cities," Thomas writes, "also appears to have been an innovation introduced by the Mughals, who drew a wise distinction between the importance of the lower currency of copper and money fabricated from the more costly gold or silver. The absence of the Sultan's name likewise indicates a departure from Indian practice, under which we have uniformly seen the designation of the supreme authority impressed upon the copper money equally with the coins of higher value. Bābur's introduction of so much of the leading ideals of his Bokhara money into Hindustan was destined to be attended with more permanence in the coins of the poor, whose standard he adopted, than in that of his more elaborately executed *dirhams* and *ashrafs*, in which he outraged local associations. The average weight of the pieces of this class is very uniform at something over 140 grains, a total we have frequently met with in the earlier coins of the Pathan issues, 80 of which went to the old *tankah*, 4 to the modified *Sikandari*, and 32 to the foreign *Bābari* and *Shāh Rukhi*."

Over a great portion of his dominions outside India, especially in the more inaccessible hills and secluded valleys, as Erskine has pointed out, Bābur's sway was 'hardly admitted by the rude tribes that traversed them; and prudence was satisfied with some easy acknowledgment which was treated as tribute. In upper and lower Sindh the *khutbah* was read in his name; but though his supremacy was acknowledged, he had little direct power. To the east of the Indus, all the Punjab, including Multan, and to the south and east of the Sutlej, the rich provinces of Hindustan lying between the river and Bihar on the one side, and the Himalaya mountains and countries of the Rajputs and of Mālwa on the other, were subject to him; the western boundary being nearly a line marked by the fortresses of Bayāna, Rantambhor, Gwalior, and Chānderi. On the south towards Bengal, the limits of his authority are not well defined. Though he possessed the greater part of Bihar, some portion of it, especially the hilly or wooded parts of the country, were still held by the remains of the Afghans or by native chiefs. On the frontier of his Empire, the Rajput principalities, the shattered kingdoms of Mālwa, Bundelkhand, and Bengal were still independent states.

'There was little uniformity in the political situation of the different parts of this vast Empire. Each kingdom, each province, each district, and (we may almost say) every village, was governed in ordinary matters by its peculiar customs. The higher officers of government exercised not only civil but criminal jurisdiction, even in capital cases, with little form and under little restraint. We have very imperfect means of knowing what were the taxes then levied. The chief revenue was the land-tax directly raised on the land in fully settled and quiet provinces; but where the country remained under its native chiefs, or was not fully subdued, was drawn by the Emperor in the shape of an annual tribute. Though frequently the officers of the army or government were rewarded by *jagirs* or estates, over which they had very often jurisdiction, both civil and criminal, their legal power over the land itself did not extend to a property in the soil, but to the exercise of such rights as belong to the government. The *jagirdar* or holder of *jagir*, was properly in Musalman times, merely an officer of government, and removable at pleasure, except where the grant had been made hereditary. Besides the land-tax, there was a duty levied on the frontier, on goods imported by caravans or otherwise. The *temgha*, or stamp, was the mark by which on cattle and in goods, the payment of the duties was ascertained. There

were transit duties on merchandise transported from one part of the country to another. There was a shop-tax, chiefly in towns; and, in parts of the country where the Muhammadans had a confirmed and safe ascendancy, the *jiziya* or poll-tax was levied on all who were not Musalmans.'

Bābur was, with all his virtues, a Musalman Emperor. When he had killed the Pagans (as he called the Hindus) he piled up a pyramid of their skulls, at least for the delectation of his orthodox followers. He considered the war against the Rajputs as *jihād* or 'holy war,' and assumed the title of *Ghāzī*, after his victory at Kanua. He spoke of the self-immolation of the Rajputs at Chānderi as '*going to hell*.' When he remitted the *temgha* after his penitence and vow to renounce wine, it was only Musalmans who were exempted from it, and not the Hindus. After the fall of Chānderi, as Ferishta tells us, he 'did not fail to rebuild and repair the mosques in Chānderi, Sārangpur, Rantambhor and Raisen which had been partly destroyed and otherwise injured by being converted into cattle-sheds, by Medini Rāi's orders.' Bābur himself stated on his conquest of Chānderi, that he converted 'the mansion of infidelity' into 'a mansion of faith.' All these facts make it difficult to accept the too liberal policy outlined in the Bhopāl MS. ascribed to Bābur:—

'O my son! People of diverse religions inhabit India, and it is a matter of thanks-giving to God that the King of kings has entrusted the government of this country to you.

It therefore behoves you that

1. You should not allow religious prejudices to influence your mind, and administer impartial justice, having due regard to religious susceptibilities and religious customs of all sections of the people.
2. In particular, refrain from the slaughter of cows which will help you to obtain a hold on the hearts of the people of India; thus you will bind the people of the land to yourself by ties of gratitude.
3. You should never destroy places of worship of any community, and always be justice-loving so that relations between the King and his subjects may remain cordial and thereby secure peace and contentment in the land.
4. The propagation of Islam will be better carried on with the sword of love and obligation than with the sword of oppression.
5. Always ignore the mutual dissensions of Shiahs and Sunnis, otherwise they will lead to the weakness of Islam.
6. Treat the different peculiarities of your subjects as the different seasons of the year so that the body politic may remain free from disease.'

But to say this, is not to assert the contrary. Bābur was beyond question a man of deep faith in God; but his belief in Islam must



have sat comparatively lightly on his mind. He had abjured his orthodoxy and become a Shiah to win the support of the Shāh of Persia to his cause. At the same time, he had refused to persecute his quondam orthodox coreligionists at the command of his newly accepted suzerain. There is no evidence of his ever having destroyed a Hindu temple or otherwise persecuted the Hindus on account of their religion. On the other hand, there is at least one reference to his equal recognition of the Hindu and Turki *Amirs* who had enlisted in his service. 'On Thursday, the 19th Shaban, I called the *Amirs*,' he writes, 'both *Turki and Hindu*, to a council, and took their opinion about passing the river.' This was during his last campaign, in Bengal (1529). At least six Hindu Rājās, and among them Rāja Bikramjīt of Rantambhor (second son of Rāṇa Sanga), accepted Bābur's sway and paid their tribute.

To conclude in the words of R. Williams: "Unfortunately, Bābur, being no administrative genius, but a plain warrior with statesmanlike instincts, found it necessary to carry on the administrative plan which he found already in existence, namely, that of parcelling the dominions among his officers, with the understanding that each was responsible for the good order of the districts under his control. The consequences of this plan had always been the same: the monarchy, having erected an artificial barrier between itself and the local administration, lost little by little all its authority, until last of all its prestige departed, and the throne became the prey for contending factions. The great *Amirs* on the other hand, gained what the crown lost. During the reign of Bābur this does not become apparent, partly because he was invested with the prestige of a conqueror: partly because the time was too short for the consequences of his policy to make themselves felt. Even before he died, however, the symptoms of radical unsoundness in the administration are not far to seek. The old haphazard financial system entirely failed to provide means for the up-keep of the professional soldiers, like the gunners and matchlockmen, who were paid directly from the royal revenue. Having distributed with lavish generosity the royal hoards in Delhi and Agra, Bābur suddenly found himself with an empty treasury. For the moment the deficit was met by a levy of 30 per cent. on the revenues of all great officers. But in the time of Humāyun there is a repetition of the old story of financial breakdown, accompanied by revolution, intrigue, and the dethronement of a dynasty."

## SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

- 1517 Death of Sikander Lodi ; accession of Ibrāhim Lodi at Delhi, and his brother Jalāl Khān at Jaunpur. Portuguese enter Chittagong.
- 1518 Execution of Jalāl Khān and imprisonment of other brothers by Ibrāhim Lodi. Muzāffar II of Gujarat restores Mahmūd Khaljī to Mālwa driving out Medini Rai. Recall of Albuquerque ; beginning of Portuguese decline.
- 1519 Bābur in trans-Indus territory. Defeat of Adil Shāh at Rāichur by Vijayanagara. Accession of Nasrat Shāh in Bengal. Mahmūd of Mālwa defeated but reinstated by Rāṇa Sanga.
- 1520 Bābur's 3rd invasion. Rāichur conquered by Krishnadeva Rāya. Sind occupied by Shāh Beg Arghūn. Rāṇa Sanga defeated by Muzāffar II of Gujarat.
- 1521 Badakhshān bestowed on Humāyun by Bābur. Death of Ahmed Shāh III Bahmani ; Amir Barid raises Alā-ud-dīn to the throne.
- 1522 Diu and Chāul submit to the Portuguese.
- 1523 Alā-ud-dīn Bahmani deposed and murdered ; Wali Shāh raised to the throne. War between Bijapur and Ahmednagar.
- 1524 Ahmednagar confederacy defeated by Bijapur. Shāh Husain Arghūn takes Multan. Ālam Khān Lodi flies to Bābur. Death of Vasco da Gama at Cochīn.
- 1525 Kaleem-ullah last of the Bahmanis raised to the throne by Amir Barid.
- 1526 Bābur's victory over Ibrāhim at Pānipat. Death of Muzāffar II of Gujarat ; accession and deposition of Sikander Shāh and Nāsir Khān ; Accession of Bahādur Shāh ; Multan becomes a dependency.
- 1527 Rāṇa Sanga defeated by Bābur at Kanua. Khāndesh and Berar armies defeat Ahmednagar. Gujarat fleet defeated by Portuguese at Chāul. Death of Chaitanya in Bengal. German troops pillage Rome.
- 1528 Chānderi taken by Bābur. Rantambhor surrendered by Rāṇa Sanga's son (Bikramjīt). Bābur crosses the Ganges.
- 1529 Bābur comes to terms with Bengal. Bahādur Shāh destroys Ahmednagar. Sultan Suleimān of Bagdad besieges Vienna.
- 1530 Bābur's death at Agra ; Humāyun's accession (at the age of 22)—rules till 1539. Henry VIII of England quarrels with the Pope.

## CHAPTER X

### THE EMPIRE IN TRANSITION

The Empire whose foundation was so arduously laid by Bābur was nevertheless precarious and unstable in character. The strength and security of an arch depends upon its key-stone; in the present case it was too weak to hold on steadily for long. The story of Humāyun's loss and re-acquisition of his heritage is not less fascinating than the adventures of his father. It is also instructive as showing the vital dependence of the Empire on the personal character of the monarch. Humāyun's life divides itself into four clear periods: (1) Early Life up to his Accession (1508-30); (2) Struggles to maintain his Inheritance (1530-40); (3) Fifteen Years of Exile (1540-55); and (4) Restoration and Death (1555-56).

#### *Early Life of Humāyun:*

Humāyun was born on 6 March 1508 in the citadel of Kabul. He mounted the throne, at Agra, on 29 December 1530, at the age of twenty-three,—three days after the death of Bābur. Khwandamir says: 'The hand of the kindness of the Creator of souls and substances put the happy robe of royalty on the person of this able monarch, the Conqueror of the world. On Friday, the 9th of the said month, in the *Jāma Masjid* at Agra the *Khutbah* was read in the name and title of this noble King, and the noise of congratulations which arose from the crowd of people reached beyond the heavens.' The *Tabakāt-i-Akbari* adds: 'On the death of the Emperor Bābur, Prince Humāyun, who arrived from Sāmbhal, ascended the throne at Agra, with the support of Amir Nizām-ud-dīn Ali Khalīfa, on the 9th Jumada-l-awwal, 937 H. The officers expressed their devotion, and the chiefs and officers were treated with great kindness. The *mansabs* and offices which were held under the last sovereign were confirmed, and the royal favour made every one happy and contented.'

On the death of his cousin, Khān Mirza, in 1520, Humāyun, at the age of twelve, had been appointed to the government of Badakhshān. Bābur himself visited the province, together with Humāyun's mother, to install the young Prince in his first charge.

When Bābur invaded India, in 1525, Humāyun joined him with a contingent from Badakhshān. In this campaign Humāyun won his victory over a force from Hisar-Firūzā, which was on its way to join Ibrāhim Lodi (1526). After Pānīpat, Humāyun, who had played his part well, received a great diamond and gifts worth 70,000,00 *dāms* (about £ 20,000). Humāyun also led the army against the Afghan insurgents in the east, and captured Sāmbhal, Jaunpur, Ghāzipūr, and Kālpī. In the battle of Kanua (1527), Humāyun led the right wing of the Mughal army and was well rewarded. In 1528, when he was back in Badakhshān, Bābur ordered him to advance with the support of his brothers to 'Hisar, Sāmarkand, or Merv, as may be most available,' adding, 'This is the time for you to court danger and hardship, and show your valour in arms. Fail not to quit yourself strenuously to meet every emergency; indolence and ease agree ill with kingship.' He also tendered him much good advice in the same letter, urging Humāyun, among other things, 'to act handsomely by his brother Kāmran; not to complain of loneliness in Badakhshān, as it was unworthy of a prince; to consult his *Begs* and ministers, particularly Khwāja Kalan; to avoid private parties; but to call the court to public levees twice daily; and above all to keep up the strength and discipline of the army.'

In spite of all this care and anxiety on the part of Bābur, Humāyun precipitately returned to India in 1529. Bābur thus enthusiastically describes the advent of his son.

'I was just talking with his mother about him when in he came. His presence opened our hearts like rosebuds, and made our eyes shine like torches. It was my rule to keep open table every day, but on this occasion, I gave feasts in his honour, and showed him every kind of distinction. We lived together for some time in the greatest intimacy. The truth is that his conversation had an inexpressible charm, and he realised absolutely the ideal of perfect manhood.'

But why did Humāyun desert his charge? The reasons were three: (i) His own failure against the Uzbegs who were making fresh incursions; (ii) Bābur's failing health, and his call to Hindāl from Kabul to be by his side; and (iii) *the conspiracy at Agra to supersede Humāyun*.

This last was in favour of Mir Muhammad Mahdi Khwāja who was Bābur's brother-in-law (sister's husband), and who had been in charge of the left wing of the Mughal army at the battle of Kanua, where Humāyun led the right wing. The origin and details of this intrigue are of little value for us, since it proved abortive. But, as

Rushbrook-Williams observes, "that the scheme should have been considered feasible at all is eloquent testimony of Bābur's feebleness in body and mind." Humāyun had met Kāmrān and Hindāl at Kābul; and they had agreed that, in view of the grave conspiracy which was afoot at Agra, Humāyun should hasten to the capital and Hindāl should take his place in Badakhshān. Ultimately, Bābur sent Suleimān Mirza to that distant province. The rest of the story has already been told. The conspiracy being nipped in the bud, Humāyun spent some time on his estate in Sāmbhal. Then followed his illness and Bābur's affectionate sacrifice on 26 December 1530. Before this happened Bābur had commended Humāyun to his nobles in unmistakable terms: "Now when I am laid low by illness, I charge you to acknowledge Humāyun as my successor, and to remain loyal to him. Be of one heart and mind towards him, and I hope to God that Humāyun will also bear himself well towards men." But no sooner was Bābur's breath stilled in death, or, to use Khwandamir's phrase, 'left the throne of this world for the eternal heaven,' than Humāyun's troubles began.

#### *Humāyun's Political Inheritance:*

Bābur had bequeathed to Humāyun 'a congeries of territories, uncemented by any bond of union or of common interest except that which had been embodied in his life. In a word, when he died, the Mughal dynasty like the Muhammadan dynasties which had preceded it had sent down no root into the soil of Hindustan.' Bābur had not annexed Bengal to the east, nor the great provinces of Mālwa and Gujarat, now united under one king (Bahādur Shāh), to the south. The many chiefs of Rajputāna were cowed but not subdued, and in most of the outlying parts of the kingdom the Mughal power was but slightly recognised.

*The Afghans:* Numerous Afghan chiefs still held powerful fiefs, and these men had not forgotten that the kings of Delhi had been Afghans but a few years before. When a member of the deposed dynasty (Sultan Mahmūd Lodi) appeared amongst them in Bihar, there were all the materials for a formidable insurrection. Thus, even in his inherited dominions—about an eighth part of all India—Humāyun was not secure from rivals and revolts. The principal rallying centres for these Afghans who were all 'ripe for revolt,' were (i) *Mahmād Lodi*: the brother of Ibrāhim, whom Bābur had driven away but not crushed. He was supported by the old heads of the Afghan nobility,

Baban and Bāyazid, who though lately driven into the recesses of the eastern provinces and Bihar, were only waiting for a fit opportunity to return and re-occupy the kingdom from which they had been expelled. The King of Bengal, who had married a sister of Mahmūd Lodi, also supported him. (ii) *Sher Khān Sūr*, who was 'the most capable, unscrupulous, and ambitious man in the whole Afghan party, had joined the rebels even during the last days of Bābur, although the latter had 'bestowed on him many marks of favour, and given him several *parganas* and put him in command in the east.' He looked upon the Mughals with great contempt as indicated by his following statement:—

'If fortune favours me, I can drive these Mughals back out of Hindustan; they are not our superiors in war, but we let slip the power that we had by reason of our dissensions. Since I had been among the Mughals, I have observed their conduct and found them lacking in order and discipline; while those who profess to lead them, in the pride of birth and rank, neglect the duty of supervision, and leave everything to officials whom they blindly trust. These subordinates act corruptly in every case.....they are led by lust of gain, and make no distinction between soldier and civilian, foe or friend.'

Fair or otherwise, this estimate only serves to reveal the ambition and attitude of Sher Khān, who was soon to drive Humāyun into exile and occupy his throne. (iii) *Ālam Khān* or Alā-ud-dīn Lodi, the uncle of Ibrāhim, was one of those that had invited Bābur to India, and fought against his nephew at Pānipat. He had later fallen into disgrace and was confined in a fort in Badakhshān. Since the death of Bābur, Alā-ud-dīn had effected his escape, and sought refuge with Bahādur Shāh of Gujarat. 'Without any open declaration of war with Humāyun, Bahādur Shāh liberally supplied Alā-ud-dīn with money and enabled him, in a very short time, to assemble a large force, and to send it against Agra, under his son Tatar Khān. This army, so hastily collected, was as speedily dispersed; and Tatar Khān fell in battle, at the head of a division which remained faithful in the desertion.' Bahādur Shāh gave shelter not merely to Alā-ud-dīn Lodi, but also to another of Humāyun's rivals, presently to be noticed. Briefly, besides the prestige and power he had acquired over his southern neighbours, Bahādur Shāh, who was ruler of Gujarat and Mālwa, "was actively pressing his triumphs over the Rajputs and rapidly approaching within striking distance of Agra."

*Cousins and Brothers:* Besides the Afghans, Humāyun had rivals and enemies nearer home: (i) *Muhammad Zamān Mirza* was the grandson of Sultan Husain of Herat, and had married his

cousin Ma'Suma, a step-sister of Humāyun. He had shown himself a capable general in Bābur's campaigns. (ii) *Muhammad Sultan Mirza* was also a descendant of Tīmūr and grandson of the late Sultan of Khurāsān. From his royal birth and station, he too was considered worthy to aspire to the throne. (iii) *Mir Muhammad Mahdi Khwāja*, a brother-in-law of Bābur, was the centre of the abortive conspiracy which has already been noticed. Bābur's prime-minister and life-long friend Khalifa was interested in him. He was in command of a division of the army, and belonged to the nobility of religion. At Kanua, as we have seen, he was put in charge of the left wing, as Humāyun led the right wing. So with the army he had enjoyed equality of status with the present Emperor. (iv) *Kāmran Mirza* was the most dangerous of all Humāyun's brothers. He was in charge of Kabul and Kandahār at the time of Bābur's death. Bābur, as we have noticed had commanded Humāyun 'to act handsomely by his brother Kāmran.' Askari and Hindāl were the other two brothers of Humāyun. Elphinstone remarks, "From his having assigned no shares to his younger children, it is probable that Bābur did not intend to divide the Empire; but Kāmran showed no disposition to give way to his brother; and as he was in possession of a strong and warlike country among the hereditary subjects of his family, he had a great advantage over Humāyun, who could not assemble an army without evacuating his new and disaffected provinces." "Ever weak and shifty," says Lane-Poole, "Askari and Hindāl were dangerous only as tools for ambitious men to play upon."

#### *Humāyun's Military Weakness:*

Surrounded as Humāyun was with astute and powerful enemies on every side, what was most necessary in him was 'a firm grasp of the military situation and resolution to meet it'. Both these qualities, Humāyun lamentably lacked. "It was a situation that called for boundless energy and soldierly genius." On the north-west was Kāmran, 'a surly ill-conditioned traitor, unworthy of Babur's seed,' and the most formidable of Humāyun's brothers. On the east were the Afghans under Mahmūd Lodi and Sher Khān. On the south was Bahādur Shāh, supporting the pretenders.

"The army was not a national one, connected by common language and country, but a mixed body of adventurers, Chaghatai, Uzbek, Mughal, Persian, Afghan, and Indian. Even the Chaghatai chiefs, who had enjoyed most of the Emperor's

confidence and favour, were not perfectly unanimous. Though attached to the family of Bābur, as the representatives of that revered prince and of the great Taimur, yet no eminent chief or head of a tribe considered the crown itself as beyond the range of his ambition. It was the age of revolution; and the kingdoms on every side—Persia, Samarkand, Bokhara, Hisar, Balkh and Hindustan itself,—saw the throne occupied by adventurers, or the immediate descendants of adventurers, not more distinguished than themselves... Under such circumstances, a thousand unforeseen accidents might occur to blow the smouldering embers of intrigue and faction into a flame.'

*In such a crisis, the personal character of the prince was a matter of vital importance.* But Humāyun, though he possessed all the humaner virtues of his great father, lamentably lacked 'the decision and spirit of command, without which no prince can secure the respect and confidence of his subjects.' He was too gentle and good to be successful in such an age and under such circumstances; his failure was in no small measure due to his 'beautiful but unwise clemency. Instead of taking a statesmanlike view of the situation, meeting the most pressing danger first, and crushing one antagonist before he engaged another, he frittered away his army in divided commands, and deprived it of its full strength; he left one enemy unsubdued behind him while he turned to meet another; and when victory by chance rewarded his courage, rather than his tactics, he reposed upon his laurels and made merry with his friends while his foes used the precious time in gathering their forces for a fresh effort.....Humāyun's troops were still the men who had won Delhi and defeated Rāṇa Sanga, and Bābur's generals were still in command of their divisions. But Humāyun weakened their valour and destroyed their confidence by division and vacillation, neglected the counsels of the commanders, and displayed such indecision that it is a marvel that any army still adhered to his falling fortunes.'

#### *Division of the Empire:*

On the day of Humāyun's accession, Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad writes, Mirza Hindāl arrived from Badakhshān and was received with great kindness. He was gratified with the grant of two of the treasures of former kings. The territories were then divided: (i) Mirza Hindāl received the district of Mewāt (Alwar) in *jagīr*; (ii) the Punjab, Kabul, and Kandahār were settled as the *jagīr* of Mirza Kāmran; (iii) Sāmbhal was given to Mirza Askari; (iv) every one of the *Amīrs* also received an increase of



his *jagir*; (v) According to the *Akbar-Nāmā*, Mirza Suleimān was confirmed in Badakhshān.

At first Kāmran had been confirmed in his possession of Kabul and Kandahār alone. But not being satisfied, Kāmran left Kandahār in the possession of Askari, and marched to Hindustan. Humāyun then added Peshāwar and Lamghan to his grant. "But Kāmran's views were too extensive to be satisfied even with that concession." He soon marched up to and occupied Lahore as well. Humāyun, surrounded as he was with great difficulties, confirmed him in his new acquisition. A *firmān* was accordingly issued, bestowing on Kāmran the government of Kabul, Kandahār, and the Punjab; "a grant which exalted that prince to the possession of dominions and power nearly equal to his own." Kāmran, who had a turn for poetry, flattered Humāyun with a few odes and wheedled out of him the rich province of Hisar Firūzā as well. This was an important grant, and most welcome to Kāmran, as it lay nearly on the high-road between his possessions in the Punjab and Delhi. The great blunder in this distribution was leaving the perfidious Kāmran in charge of the most vital part of Bābur's dominions. By this cession Humāyun was left to govern recent conquests, while he was deprived of the resources by which they had been gained, and by which alone they might have also been retained.

'After arranging the affairs of the State, His Majesty proceeded to Kālinjar, the Rāja of which place expressed his fealty, and ranged himself among the supporters of the throne. In those days, sultan Mahmūd (son of Sultan Sikander Lodi), with the assistance of Baban, Bāyazid, and the Afghan nobles, had raised the standard of opposition, and had taken possession of Jaunpur and its dependencies. Humāyun now marched to subdue him, and having achieved success, he returned victorious to Agra. There he held a great festival, and all the nobles and chiefs were honoured with robes and Arab horses. It is said that 12,000 persons received robes at that feast, and 2,000 of them were presented with outer garments of gold brocade and gilt buttons.'

Though such pomp was not unknown to Bābur, Humāyun's already depleted treasury could ill-afford such extravagance at this moment of crisis, when he had to fight enemies on all sides. Hence there was a repetition of 'the old story of financial breakdown, accompanied by revolution, intrigue, and the dethronement of a dynasty.' Humāyun's lavishness on this occasion was typical of his general extravagance.

'At this time Muhammad Zamān Mirza,...who had originally come from Balkh to seek a refuge with His late Majesty, now set

himself up in opposition, but he was taken prisoner, and was sent as a warning for rebels to the fort of Bayāna, and placed in the custody of Yadgar Taghai. An order was given to deprive him of sight, but the servants of Yadgar Beg saved the pupils of his eyes from the effects of the operation. After a short time he made his escape, and fled to Sultan Bahādur of Gujarat. About the same time Muhammad Sultan Mirza, with his two sons Ulugh Mirza, and Shāh Mirza, went off to Kanauj, and there raised a rebellion.

### *The Gujarat Campaign :*

‘His Majesty sent a person with letters to Sultan Bahādur of Gujarat demanding the surrender of Muhammad Zamān Mirza, to which he returned a haughty refusal, and then showed signs of rebellion and resistance. This excited the anger of the Emperor, and he resolved to march against Gujarat and chastise Sultan Bahādur. He proceeded to Gwalior and there passed two months in making excursions and hunting’ (1532). When Humāyun finally marched against Bahādur Shāh, that prince was busy with the siege of Chitor (1534). At the approach of the Emperor he held a council of war. ‘Many officers advised the raising of the siege, but Sadr Khān, who was the chief of the nobles, observed that they were warring against infidels, and that if a sovereign of Musalmans were to attack them while so engaged, he would in effect assist the infidels, and this would remain a reproach against him among Musalmans until the Day of Judgment. He therefore advised the continuance of the siege, and would not believe that the Emperor would attack them. When the Emperor had passed through Mālwa and had come to Sārangpur, he was informed of this; so he rested there.’ This was Humāyun’s next great blunder. It was a double failing: timely assistance might have won over the Rāṇa as a perpetual ally who might have acted as a bulwark against Gujarat; if attacked at once, Bahādur Shāh might perhaps have been crushed at the first blow. But as it happened, ‘Sultan Bahādur carried on the siege of Chitor at his ease, and finally took it by storm, and secured an immense booty. In celebration of the victory, he gave a great feast, and divided the spoil among his soldiers. Then he turned his front to the Imperial army.’ Humāyun, hearing of this, marched against Bahādur Shāh and met him at Mandasor. The King of Gujarat again called a council of war. Sadr Khān advised giving battle, but Rūmi Khān who commanded the artillery, counselled entrenchment so as to give full play to his guns (*top*) and rockets (*tufang*).

'They were very strong in artillery, and except the Emperor of Rûm, no other potentate could equal them. Sultan Bahādur acquiesced in this view, and ordered an entrenchment to be formed round his camp. For two months Humāyun did nothing but cut off the supplies of the enemy. Famine ensued in the enemy's camp. The horses and animals and many men perished from want, and the army was dismounted. When Sultan Bahādur perceived that if he remained longer he would be taken prisoner, he went off by the rear of the pavilion and went towards Māndu with five of his most trusty adherents.....When his men heard of his escape, they took to flight.

'Humāyun pursued Bahādur Shāh to Māndu and besieged the fort. Sultan Bahādur was asleep when the alarm was raised. A general panic followed and the Gujaratis took to flight. Sultan Bahādur made off with five or six horsemen towards Gujarat..... He had much treasure and many jewels in the fort of Champaner and these he carried off to Ahmedābad. (He set fire to the town before leaving Champaner.) Humāyun pursued him up to Cambay. On his way he took Ahmedābad, which being plundered yielded enormous spoil.' Bahādur Shāh ultimately escaped to the island of Diu. Humāyun, instead of following up his success and finishing with the fugitive, marched to Champaner.

This important fortress occupies the upper part of a hill that rises towering out of the level plain, in the south-east portion of Gujarat, and is visible over a great part of that province. The fortress is surrounded on several of its sides by steep and nearly perpendicular rocks which have gained for it the reputation of being impregnable to active operation. It had an upper and a lower fort, the one rising above the other; while the extensive, and at the same time magnificent town of Muhammadābad extended on one side along its base. Humāyun invested it vainly for four months but finally took it in the manner described below. The great strength of this place, the numerous garrison, and the boldness and success of the enterprise by which its capture was achieved, says Ferishta, 'render this action equal in the opinion of military men, to anything of the kind recorded in history.'

Champaner was no doubt taken (1535-6), Humāyun himself with Bairām Khān scaling the fort at night on its most abrupt side, with the help of steel spikes driven into the scarp of the rock. 'Great numbers of the garrison were slain, and many of their wives and children cast themselves down from the walls of the fort and were killed.' Ikhtiyār Khān who held a high position among the Gujaratis, was kindly received by the Emperor, who made him one of his personal attendants. He was a man of great knowledge and experience, and had a great reputation as a statesman, an accomplished

geometrician and astronomer. He was also of some repute as a poet. When the fort was taken, the place where Bahādūr Shāh had hidden his treasure was known only to one officer. Humāyun instead of getting the secret out of him by torture, preferred to make use of wine: the man was invited to an entertainment; and 'when his heart was softened by kindness and warmed with good cheer,' he revealed the secret. The treasure was found in a vault under the bed of a reservoir. 'The gold was divided among the soldiers,—so much a head. The goods and stuffs of Rūm, Europe, and China, and of every part of the world, which the kings of Gujarat had treasured, all fell a prey to the victors. So vast was the amount of gold and effects that came into the possession of the soldiers that no person attempted to collect revenue that year in Gujarat.'

After this, there was a slight rally at Ahmedābad in favour of Bahādūr Shāh. But Mirza Askari who was at Muhammadābad won over them an easy victory. 'More than two thousand men were killed in the battle. The Emperor bestowed Ahmedābad and its dependencies upon Mirza Askari in *jagir*, Pātan upon Mirza Yadgar Nāsir, and Broach upon Mirza Hindu Beg. Tardi Beg received Champaner, and Kāsim Hussain obtained Baroda. Khān Jahān Shirāzi and other nobles also received grants. Humāyun proceeded after these successes to Burhānpur, and thence to Māndu.

In this state of affairs according to Ferishta, Buhārān Nizām Shāh, Imād Shāh, and the other sovereigns of the Deccan, apprehensive of his designs wrote submissive letters, tendering their allegiance. Humāyun had scarcely obtained their flattering tokens of his success, when accounts arrived of the insurrection created in the north by Sher Khān.

'Mālwa and Gujarat—two provinces equal in area to all the rest of Humāyun's kingdom—had fallen like ripe fruit into his hands. Never was conquest so easy. Never, too, was conquest more recklessly squandered away.' 'The Emperor Humāyun,' says Nazām-ud-din Ahmad, 'remained for a year at Agra and took his pleasure.' Meanwhile, both Gujarat and Mālwa were rapidly lost (1535-1536).

'One night Mirza Askari in a convivial party took too much wine, and giving license to his tongue, exclaimed, "I am a King, and the shadow of God." Just at this period Hindu Beg had counselled Mirza Askari to have the *khutbah* recited and coin struck in his name, and set up his claim to independence expecting that the troops in hopes (of reward) would devote themselves to his service. Mirza Askari did not accept this advice; but Tardi Beg . . . sent a messenger to Humāyun, to inform him that Mirza Askari had hostile intentions, and was about to march upon Agra and proclaim himself King.'

Ahmedābad and other places revolted in favour of Bahādur Shāh, who soon returned from Diu with Portuguese aid, and recovered all his lost dominions. 'Mirza Askari and the *Amirs* mounted and made a show of fighting, and then retired.....But before Mirza Askari retreated from Ahmedābad, the news-writers and reporters had communicated to the Emperor the proposition which Mirza Hindu Beg had made to the Mirza for his assuming the crown, and although he had not assented thereto, they reported that he entertained hostile designs' (1535-36).

Humāyun left Māndu, and reached Agra before Askari. Although not deceived, he considered it prudent to take no notice of reports. Thus the countries of Mālwa and Gujarat, 'the conquest of which had been obtained by the exertions of so fine an army, were now abandoned without a struggle.' This 'beautiful but unwise clemency' towards his brothers was to prove Humāyun's ruin.

When Sultan Bahādur was defeated, Humāyun had sent away Muhammad Zamān Mirza to Sind, instead of taking better account of him. That pretender laid siege to Lahore, when, on account of trouble in Kandahār, Kāmran had left the Punjab temporarily. When Muhammad Zamān heard of the Emperor's return to Agra, he again took refuge in Gujarat. Kāmran meanwhile recovered Kandahār from the Persians who had for some time occupied it.

Nuno d'Cuna, the Portuguese Viceroy, had afforded Bahādur Shāh a force of 500 Europeans in return for allowing them to fortify Diu and important trade concessions. Later, Bahādur Shāh was invited to a conference by the Portuguese in the course of which he fell into the sea and died in 1537, at the age of 30. But Humāyun took no advantage of the death of his intrepid enemy which put Gujarat into disorder.

### *The Fateful Contest with Sher Khān :*

Sher Khān, already mentioned as one of the important leaders of the Afghan revolt against the Mughals, had made himself master of the province of South Bihar, by the end of 1531, and occupied the important stronghold of Chunar (near Benares).

The fort of Chunar stands on a rock close to the Ganges, and is, as it were, a detached portion of the Vindhya Mountains which extend to the same river near Mirzāpur. From that neighbourhood the hills recede westwards, by the Fort of Rohtas and Shirghari, and do not approach the river again, until near Bhāgalpur, after which they run straight south, leaving the Ganges at a great distance. These hills, therefore, covered the whole of the south-west of Bihar and Bengal, and shut up the road along the south bank of the Ganges, in two

places—one near Chunar and the other at Sicragalli, east of Bhāgalpur. The hills themselves are not high, but poor and covered with woods. 'As Humāyun marched along the Ganges and made use of that river to convey his guns and stores, it was necessary for him to begin with the siege of Chunar'.

Humāyun, before marching south against Bahādur Shāh, but after the defeat of Mahmūd Lodi at Dauroh, encountered Sher Khān for the first time. The *Tarikh-i-Sher-Shāhi* of Abbās Khān gives the following account of this event :—

'When Humāyun had overcome Sultan Mahmūd, and had put the greater number of his opponents to death, he sent Hindu Beg to take Chunar from Sher Khān, but Sher Khān declined to give it up to him. When he heard this, Humāyun commanded his victorious standards to be set in motion towards Chunar.....The army of Humāyun besieged Chunar.....Sher Khān knew that the Emperor would be unable to delay long in those parts, for his spies brought him word that Bahādur Shāh, the King of Gujarat, had conquered the kingdom of Māndu and was meditating the seizure of Delhi and would shortly declare war. Humāyun also having received this intelligence, Sher Khān sent his *wakil* to him and wrote saying, "I am your slave, and the client of Junaid Barlas.....As you must entrust the fort of Chunar to some one, make it over to me, and I will send my son Kutb Khān to accompany you in this expedition. Do you lay aside all anxiety as regards these parts; for if either I or any other Afghan do any act unbecoming or disloyal, you have my son with you; inflict on him such reprisals as may be a warning to others." When Sher Khān's emissary represented this to the Emperor Humāyun, he replied, "I will give Chunar to Sher Khān, but on this condition, that he sends Jalāl Khān with me." Finally, when Humāyun heard of Mirza Muhammad Zamān's escape from Bayāna, and Bahādur Shāh's intended march on Delhi, he agreed to Sher Khān's proposal. Sher Khān was delighted and sent Kutb Khān, his son, and Isā Khān his chamberlain, to the Emperor, who set off to Agra, and employed himself in suppressing the rebellion of Sultan Bahādur.'

Sher Khān took advantage of this opportunity, and did not leave a single enemy of his remaining throughout the kingdom of Bihar. When the Emperor came back from Gujarat, the Khān-Khānan Yusuf-Khail (who brought the Emperor Bābur from Kabul to Hindustan) said to him: "It is not wise to neglect Sher Khān, for he is rebelliously inclined, and well understands all matters pertaining to government; moreover, all the Afghans are collected round him." But Humāyun, relying on the vastness of his forces, took no heed of Sher Khān, and remaining for the rainy season at Agra, sent Hindu Beg to Jaunpur, with directions to write a full and true report regarding Sher Khān.

'When Sher Khan heard that the Emperor Humāyun intended himself marching towards Bihar, he sent magnificent presents to Hindu Beg, Governor of Jaunpur, and gained his good-will. At the same time Sher Khān wrote thus:

"From what I promised I have not departed. I have not invaded the Emperor's country. Kindly write to the Emperor, and assuring him of my loyalty, dissuade him from marching in this direction; for I am his servant and well-wisher." When Hindu Beg beheld Sher Khān's presents, he approved of them and was well pleased, and he said to the *vakil*, "So long as I live let your mind be easy. No one shall injure you." And in the presence of Sher Khān's *vakil* wrote a letter to the Emperor Humāyun saying: "Sher Khān is a loyal servant of Your Majesty, and strikes coin and reads the *khutbah* in your name, and has not transgressed the boundaries of Your Majesty's territory, or done anything since your departure, which could be any cause of annoyance to you." The Emperor, on receipt of Hindu Beg's letter, deferred his journey that year. Sher Khān meanwhile detached Jalāl Khān, Khāwas Khān senior, and other chiefs, to conquer Bengal and the city of Gaur. On their entering Bengal, Sultan Mahmūd, unable to oppose them retired to the Fort of Gaur. The Afghans having made themselves masters of the surrounding country, invested and besieged that fortress, before which daily skirmishes took place.

The following year Humāyun marched towards Bihar and Bengal. When he arrived near Chunar, he consulted his nobles whether he should first take that fortress, or march towards Gaur, which the son of Sher Khān was besieging, but had not yet taken. All his Mughal nobles advised that he should first take Chunar, and then march on Gaur, and it was so determined. But when Chunar fell to Humāyun, Gaur had already been captured by Sher Khān, who also took about the same time the more important fort of Rohtas by stratagem. Sher Khān thanked God and said: "The fort of Chunar is no fort in comparison with this; as that has gone out of my possession, this has come into it. I was not so pleased at the conquest of Gaur as I am at getting possession of Rohtas." By his wrong choice Humāyun committed another great blunder, and walked into the snare that Sher Khān had cleverly laid for him. He had to pay dearly for this initial mistake in strategy. After the fall of Chunar, as was his wont, he indulged in giving a great banquet and in distributing honours and rewards.

Then he halted at Benares, and sent an envoy to Sher Khān with a view to get possession of the country of Bihar. But Sher Khān said to the envoy, "I have captured this fort of Gaur, and have collected about me a very large force of Afghans. If the Emperor will abandon all design upon Bengal, I will surrender Bihar to him, and make it over to whomsoever he will depute, and will agree to the same boundaries of Bengal as existed in Sultan Sikander's time; and I will send all the ensigns of royalty—as the umbrella, throne, etc. to the Emperor, and will yearly send him ten *lacs* of rupees from

Bengal. But let the Emperor return towards Agra." The Emperor, on hearing this became exceedingly glad, and agreed to what Sher Khān proposed. Sher Khān, too, was much delighted, and said, "I will fulfil the terms agreed upon, and will pray day and night to Almighty God that while life lasts no hostility may befall between the Emperor and myself, for I am his dependant and servant."

Three days after this despatch, says the chronicler, the envoy of Sultan Mahmūd, the successor of Nusrat Shāh of Bengal, came into the presence of the Emperor Humāyun, and made the following communication: "The Afghans have seized the Fort of Gaur, but most of the country is yet in my possession: let not Your Majesty trust to Sher Khān's promises, but march towards these parts, and before they have established and strengthened themselves, expel them from the country, and altogether suppress this revolt. I also will join you, and they are not powerful enough to oppose you." As soon as he heard this report of Sultan Mahmūd, the Emperor ordered his victorious standards to be set in motion towards Bengal. There in four days with little difficulty he took possession of Gaur, the capital of Bengal, and drove away all the Afghans. After cleansing and repairing the city, the first act of His Majesty was to divide the province into *jagirs* among his officers; after which he very unaccountably shut himself up in his *harem*, and abandoned himself to every kind of indulgence and luxury. 'When Humāyun entered Gaur,' says Niamatulla, 'Sher Khān had previously fitted up all the mansions of that place with an exquisite variety of ornaments and embellishments, and rendered them a perfect gallery of pictures, by partly-coloured carpets and costly silk-stuffs, in the hope that Humāyun, charmed with it, would be induced to prolong his stay there; and his designs were unexpectedly seconded by fate, for Humāyun remained four months in Gaur, and had no leisure for any other occupation than pleasure and enjoyment. While the King had thus for several months given himself up to pleasure and indolence, information was at length conveyed to him that Sher Khān had killed 700 Mughals, had laid siege to the fortress of Chunar, and taken the city of Benares; and had also sent forward an army along the bank of the Ganges to take Kanauj; that he had further seized the families of several of the officers and sent them prisoners to Rohtas.'

Sher Khān looked upon Humāyun's conduct as a definite betrayal of his previous engagement with himself.

"I have observed all loyalty to the Emperor," he said, "and have committed no offence against him, and have not encroached upon his boundaries.....The Emperor desired the kingdom of Bihar, and I was willing to surrender it. But it is not the right way to govern a kingdom to alienate so large a force (as Sher Khān then possessed) from his service; and in order to please their enemies, to ruin and slay the Afghans. But since the Emperor takes no heed, and has violated his promise,.....you will hear what deeds the Afghans will do, and the march to Bengal will end in repentance and regret, for now the Afghans are united, and have laid aside their mutual quarrels and envyings. The country which the Mughals have taken from the Afghans, they got through the internal dissensions among the latter."



As Humāyun did not keep to his word, Sher Khān felt himself free to act as he pleased. Accordingly, he dispatched some of his officers to the west to attack the Empire when Humāyun was away in Bengal. They took Benares and killed the greater part of the Mughal garrison there. Then they proceeded to Bahraich, and drove out the Mughals from those parts, until they arrived at and captured the city of Sāmbhal, and made slaves of the inhabitants and spoiled the city. Another force was sent towards Jaunpur, the governor of which place was killed in battle, and the same force was sent in the direction of Agra. Every governor on the part of the Emperor Humāyun, throughout the whole country, who offered any opposition, was killed, or was defeated and driven out of the country; so that all the districts as far as Kanauj and Sāmbhal fell into the possession of the Afghans. The officers of Sher Khān also collected the revenue of both the autumn and spring harvests of these parts.'

Meanwhile, Mirza Hindāl who had returned to Agra from Humāyun's camp, raised the standard of revolt at the capital, and murdered Sheikh Bahlol who was much respected by Humāyun. 'When the Emperor heard of this defection, he left Jahāngir Beg in charge of Bengal, with 5,000 chosen men, and set off for Agra. At this time Muhammad Zamān Mirza returned from Gujarat with great contrition, and waited upon the Emperor, who forgave him and did not utter a word of reproach.' Humāyun, however, was not allowed to escape so easily by Sher Khān. Summoning all his forces from Bihar, Jaunpur, and other places he collected them in the environs of the fort of Rohtas. Then he marched to confront the Emperor. Having consulted his nobles, and finding that they all enthusiastically responded, Sher Khān addressed his army thus :

"For two days I have drawn out my army, and have returned to my encampment, that I might put the Emperor off his guard that he might not suspect that my army was coming towards him. Now turn, set your faces towards the army of the Emperor, and *let not the honour of the Afghans out of your grasp nor fail to display your utmost devotion, for now is the time to regain the Empire of Hindustan.*"

Humāyun's brother Kāmran Mirza, instead of aiding him in this crisis, Ferishta tells us, aspired to the throne, and marched with 10,000 horse from Lahore, giving out that he came to offer assistance. On the arrival of Kāmran at Delhi, Hindāl Mirza prevailed on him to unite their forces in prosecution of the siege.....The princes finding the governor of Delhi refusing to surrender or betray, raised the siege and marched towards Agra. On reaching that city, the jealousy which

the brothers naturally entertained against each other (the eyes of both being turned towards the throne) evinced itself in open war. Hindāl Mirza, being deserted by many of his party, fled to Alwar with 5,000 horse and 300 elephants; while Kāmraṇ Mirza entering Agra proclaimed himself King.' Yet Humāyun despising the forces of Sher Khān, 'did not even inspect his forces nor pay regard to what is necessary in an engagement; nor did he take into consideration the disorganisation which the climate of Bengal had produced in his army.'

'Sher Khān knew all the devices and stratagems of war, and knew how to commence and conclude an engagement, and had experienced both prosperity and misfortune. The army of the Mughals had not extricated themselves from their camp, before the Afghan army were already upon them, and coming boldly on, attacked the army of the Emperor without hesitation. In the twinkling of an eye, they routed the Mughal forces on 26 June 1539. Humāyun had not completed his ablutions when the intelligence reached him that the Mughals were utterly scattered, so that to rally them was impossible. The confusion in the army was so great that he had no time to remove his family, but fled in the direction of Agra with the intention of collecting all his forces at that place, and returning again from thence to destroy his enemy.' Jauhar, Humāyun's personal attendant, gives the following particulars of the disastrous end of this battle which was fought at Chupāghāt or Chaunsa:—

'An archer seated on an elephant discharged an arrow which wounded the King in the arm, and the enemy began to surround him. His Majesty then called to his troops to advance and charge the enemy, but no one obeyed; and the Afghans having succeeded in throwing everything into confusion, one of the King's followers came up, seized his bridle, and said, "There is no time to be lost; when your friends forsake you, flight is the only remedy." The King then proceeded to the bank of the river, and although followed by one of his own elephants, he urged his horse into the stream, but in a short time the horse sank. On seeing this event, a water-carrier, who had distended his leather bag (*masak*) with air offered it to His Majesty, who by means of the bag swam the river. According to the most authentic accounts, 8,000 Mughals exclusive of Hindus, were drowned, during the flight, among whom was the prince Muhammad Zamān Mirza.'

After this victory, Sher Khān assumed the title and insignia of royalty, at the desire of his nobles. He seated himself on the throne, unfolded the umbrella over his head, and assumed the name of Sher Shāh, and struck coin, and caused the *khuibah* to be read in his own name; and he took also the additional title of Shāh Ālam. The coro-

nation, according to Professor Qanungo, took place at Gaur, about the beginning of December 1539.

Meanwhile Humāyun reached Agra. 'Mirza Kāmrān had received no intelligence before the Emperor arrived. The latter repaired at once to the pavilion of his brothers, and on seeing each other, the eyes of the brothers filled with tears. Hindāl Mirza (who had come from Alwar) received pardon for his offences, and then came and waited upon the Emperor. Muhammad Sultān Mirza and his sons also came in and joined them. Consultations were held. Mirza Kāmrān was desirous of returning to Lahore, and showed unbounded expectations. The Emperor assented to all his extraordinary propositions. Khwāja Kalan Beg exerted himself to bring about the return of Mirza Kāmrān. The negotiations went on for six months. Meanwhile, Mirza Kāmrān had been attacked with severe sickness, and some designing persons had instilled into his mind that his illness was the result of poison administered to him by the Emperor's directions. So, ill as he was, he started for Lahore, having sent Khwāja Kalan Beg in advance. He promised to leave a considerable portion of his army to assist his brother at Agra; but in spite of this promise, he carried all off with him, excepting only 2,000 men whom he left at Agra under the command of Sikander.'

Sher Shāh himself pursued the Emperor Humāyun and got possession of the whole country, as far as Kālpi and Kanauj. He sent Isā Khān towards Gujarat and Māndu and to the chiefs of these parts he wrote saying, "I am about to send a son of mine into your neighbourhood. When the Emperor Humāyun moves towards Kanauj, do you accompany my son, and seize and lay waste the country about Agra and Delhi."

'When the Emperor Humāyun heard that Sher Shāh had sent his son towards Chānderi, that he might raise disturbances in those parts, he sent both his brothers, Mirza Hindāl and Mirza Askari, with other nobles in that direction. When the Mālwa chiefs heard that the two brothers of the Emperor were coming to oppose Kutb Khān, they gave him no assistance. Kutb Khān went from Chānderi to the city of Chondha (Kālpi?), and engaging the Mughals at Chondha, was slain. Mirza Hindāl and Mirza Askari having gained this victory, returned to the Emperor. When Sher Shāh heard of this, he was extremely grieved and enraged. The Mughals gained excessive confidence from this victory, and large forces having come also from their own

country, the Emperor Humāyun arrayed his army and came to Kanauj (April 1540). Sher Shāh also fortified himself on the opposite side.'

*Battle of Kanauj or Bilgram:*

'On the 10th Muharram 947 A. H. both armies drew out their forces.' Sher Shāh ordered each chief to return to his own followers and to remain with them; and he himself went through the army and set it in proper array. Quite in contrast to this was the ineptitude on the side of Humāyan, Mirza Haidar, Bābur's cousin, who was himself one of the commanding officers on the occasion, vividly describes the condition of the Mughal army and the course and result of the battle thus:—

'The Imperial army reached the banks of the Ganges in the best way that it could. There it encamped and lay for about a month, the Emperor being on one side of the river, and Sher Shāh on the other, facing each other. The armies may have amounted to more than 200,000 men. Muhammad Sultan Mirza, who had several times revolted against Humāyun, but being unsuccessful, had sought forgiveness and had been pardoned, now having colluded with Sher Shāh, deserted.

'A new way was thus opened. Everybody began to desert, and the most surprising part of it was, that many of those who deserted did not go over to Sher Shāh, and could expect no favour from him. A heated feeling ran through the army, and the cry was, "Let us go and rest in our own homes." A number also of Kāmran's auxiliary forces deserted and fled to Lahore...

'As the army had taken to desert, it was judged better to risk a battle, than to see it go to ruin without fighting. If the result was unfavourable, in that case, we could not at least be accused of having abandoned the Empire without striking a blow. We therefore crossed the river. Both armies entrenched themselves. Everyday skirmishes occurred between the adventurous swaggering spirits of both sides. These proceedings were put an end to by the monsoon rains, which came on and flooded the ground, rendering it unfit for camp. To move was indispensable. Opinions were expressed that another such a deluge would sink the whole army in the abyss of despair, and it was decided to move to a rising ground, which the inundation could not reach, and which lay in front of the enemy. I went to reconnoitre, and found a place suitable for the purpose...

'Between me and the river there was a force of 27 *Amirs*, all of whom carried the *tugh* banner....On the day of battle, when Sher Shāh, having formed his divisions, marched out, of all these 27 *tugh* banners, not one was to be seen, for the great nobles had hidden them in the apprehension that the enemy might advance towards them. The soldiership and bravery of these *Amirs* may be conceived from this exhibition of courage. Sher Shāh came out in five divisions of 1000 men each, and in advance of him were 3000 men. I estimated the whole as being less than 15,000, but I calculated the Chaghatai force as about 40,000, all mounted on tipchak horses, and clad in iron armour..

They surged like the waves of the sea, but the courage of the *Amirs* and officers of the army was such as I have described.

'Every *Amir* and *Wazir* in the Chaghatai army, whether he be rich or poor, has his *ghulāms*. An *Amir* of note with his 100 retainers and followers has 500 servants and *ghulāms*, who in the day of battle render no assistance to their master and have no control over themselves. So in whatsoever place there was conflict, the *ghulāms* were entirely ungovernable. When they lost their master, they were seized with panic, and blindly rushed about in terror. In short, it was impossible to hold our ground. They so pressed upon us in the rear, that they drove the centre upon the chains stretched between the gun-carriages, and they and the soldiers dashed each other upon them. Such was the state of the centre.

'On the right, Sher Shāh advanced in battle array; but before an arrow was discharged, the camp-followers fled like chaff before the wind, and breaking the line, they all pressed towards the centre.

'The chaghatais were defeated in this battle-field where not a man, either friend or foe, was wounded; not a gun was fired; and the chariots were useless. The Emperor fled to Agra; and when the enemy approached that city, he made no delay but went to Lahore.

Sher Shāh having sent two of his best officers to besiege Gwalior and Sāmbhal, and 'speedily settled the country about Kanauij, betook himself in the direction of Agra. When Sher Shāh approached Agra, the Emperor, unable to remain there, fled towards Lahore. Sher Shāh was greatly displeased at this,... and on his arrival at Agra, remained there, for some days himself, but sent Khāwas Khān and Barmazid Gur in the direction of Lahore, with a large Afghan force to pursue the Emperor... But the Emperor and Mirza Kāmrān quitted Lahore, which was shortly afterwards occupied by Sher Shāh, who however, made no halt there. On the third march beyond Lahore, he heard that Mirza Kāmrān had gone by way of the Judh hills to Kābul, and that the Emperor Humāyun was marching along the banks of the Indus to Multan and Bhakkar. The King went to Khushab and thence despatched Khāwas Khān...and the greater part of the army, in pursuit of the Emperor, towards Multan. He instructed them not to engage the Emperor, but to drive him beyond the borders of the Kingdom, and then to return.'

Here we must slightly retrace our steps to recount Humāyun's last pathetic efforts to win the co-operation of his ungrateful brothers. 'At the beginning of Rabiul awwal all the Chaghatai Sultans and *Amirs* were assembled in Lahore; but Mirza Muhammad Sultan and his sons, who had come to Lahore, fled from thence to Multan. Mirza Hindāl and Mirza Yadgar Nāsir found it expedient to go towards

Bhakkar and Thatta, and Mirza Kāmran determined to go to Kabul as soon as the party was broken up.

‘It was abundantly manifest to the Emperor that there was no possibility of bringing his brothers and *Amirs* to any common agreement, and he was very despondent.’ Ferishta says, ‘Humāyun used every possible argument with his brothers to effect a coalition of interest against Sher Shāh telling them that their intestine feud must end in their losing that mighty Empire which had cost their father so much pains to acquire; that their conduct would involve the house of Timūr in one common ruin; and that no remedy existed but to reunite against the common enemy, and afterwards to divide the Empire amongst themselves. These arguments had no weight with the King’s brothers, who, blinded by ambition, determined rather to lose all than to be content with a part.’

‘Mirza Haidar Beg after much consultation had been sent off with a party who had volunteered for service in Kashmir, and Khwāja Kalan Beg was ordered to follow him. When the Mirza had reached Naushahr, and Kalan Beg had got as far as Sialkot, intelligence reached the Emperor that Sher Shāh had crossed the river (Beas) at Sultānpūr, and was only a few *kos* distant. His Majesty then passed over the river of Lahore.

‘Mirza Kāmran, after proving faithless to the oaths and compacts which he had made to help in whatever was decided upon, now thought it expedient to retire with the Emperor to Bahrah. When Khwāja Kalan Beg heard of this, he marched rapidly from Sialkot, and joined the camp of Humāyun. At Bahrah, Mirza Kāmran and Mirza Askari parted from Humāyun, and went off accompanied by Khwāja Kalan Beg to Kabul.’ This was towards the end of October, 1546.

#### *Humāyun in Exile :*

*In the Desert :* ‘Mirza Hindāl and Mirza Yadgar Nāsir still remained with Humāyun. They wandered about from place to place, Rohri, Bhakkar, Patar—and sought refuge in vain from Shāh Husain Arghūn, ruler of Thatta, with a view to ‘*attempt the recovery of Gujarat.*’ Grain becoming scarce at Bhakkar, the Emperor marched off to Patar, where Mirza Hindāl was staying, for he had heard that Mirza Hindāl intended to go to Kandahār. It was here, in the camp of Hindāl at Patar, that Humāyun fell in love with Maryam-i Makāni Hamidā Bānu Begam (who soon became mother of Akbar), in the summer of 1541. Nizām-ud-dīn says, he spent several days of happiness

and pleasure in the camp of Hindāl. The Emperor forbade Hindāl to go to Kandahār, but he did not obey. When Humāyun was informed of it, he was much troubled by the want of union, among his brothers. Then the conquest of Thatta was thought of. When the Emperor marched for Thatta, a large body of soldiers parted from him and stayed at Bhakkar. He made a vain attempt to capture the fort of Sehwan, and retired to Bhakkar. Mirza Yadgar Nāsir proved treacherous and helped the enemy to harass Humāyun. In this extremity he resolved upon marching to Maldeo 'one of the faithful *zamindars* of Hindustan, who at that time surpassed all the *zamindars* of Hindustan in power and in the number of his forces.' Maldeo had sent letters to Bhakkar, declaring his loyalty, and offering assistance in effecting the subjugation of Hindustan. Humāyun, accordingly, marched towards Maldeo's country by way of Jesalmir.

But when Maldeo was informed of the Emperor's weakness he was much alarmed, for he knew that he had not sufficient forces of his own to withstand Sher Shāh. For Sher Shāh had sent an ambassador to Maldeo, holding out great expectations, and the latter had promised to make Humāyun a prisoner if possible, and to give him over into the hands of his enemy. Nagaur and its dependencies had fallen into the power of Sher Shāh, and consequently he was afraid lest Sher Shāh should be annoyed, and send a large army into his territory against Humāyun. But luckily, one of the Emperor's librarians, who at the time of his defeat had fled to Maldeo, now wrote to Humāyun informing him that Maldeo was bent upon treachery, and advising him to get out of his territory as quickly as possible. So Humāyun marched off at once to Amarkot.

'At length, with extreme toil, they reached Amarkot, which is 100 *kos* distant from Thatta. The Rāna of Amarkot was kindly disposed, and came out to meet the Emperor, and offered his services. The army rested from their hardships some days in the city, and whatsoever the Emperor had in his treasury he distributed among his soldiers. Fortune now for a time changed its treatment of the Emperor, by giving him a son, and impressing an imperishable mark upon the page of time. The child was born on the 5th Rajab, 949 A. H., 15 October 1542, and the Emperor under spiritual guidance gave to the child the name of Jalāl-ud-dīn Muhammad Akbar.'

"Three years had elapsed since his first arrival in Sind, of which 18 months had been occupied in his negotiations and military attempts in that country; 6 months were spent in his journeys to the eastward of the Indus, and a year in his residence at Jūn (a branch of the Indus, half way between Thatta and Amarkot) and his journey to Kandahar."

About July 1543, 'His Majesty, seeing that it was not advisable to remain longer in this country, determined upon going to Kandahār.' At this time Bairām Khān, who later became famous as Akbar's guardian, rejoined him; he had sought refuge in Gujarat after Humāyun's defeat at Kanauj, and after some adventures found the way back to his master. But Humāyun's enemies still dogged his footsteps. Shāh Husain of Thatta informed Mirzas Askari and Kāmran about his movements, and those ungrateful wretches 'wrote back desiring him to bar his progress and make him prisoner. Humāyun only said: "What is the worth of Kandahār and Kabul that I should strive with my faithless brothers?" Leaving the young Prince Akbar, who was only a year old, at Kandahār, in the charge of a small party, Humāyun accompanied by Bairām Khān, and a few others, 'set off even without determining the route.'

*In Persia:* 'The hostile proceedings of his brothers made these parts no safe place for His Majesty; so he proceeded onwards towards Khurāsān and Irāq.' Upon entering Sistan, Ahmad Sultan Shamlu, governor of that province under Shāh Tahmasp, received him with great kindness. Thence, he proceeded to Herat, 'because he had heard great praise of the city,' and was equally well received. 'He received all that he could require, and lacked nothing until the time of his meeting Shāh Tahmasp. All the palaces and gardens of Herat are beautiful to see, and His Majesty visited them, after which he took his departure for Meshed and Tus.' Under the orders of the Shāh, every governor on the route supplied him with all things he required. At length he reached Pulak Surlik and had an interview with Shāh Tahmasp, who entertained him and showed every honour and distinction worthy of both host and guest. He obtained from the Shāh a force of 14,000 men, with whom he marched towards Kandahār. In return Humāyun promised to establish the *Shiah* faith in his dominions, when he reacquired them, and to hand over Kandahār to the Persians.

#### *Reconquest of Hindustan:*

At this time, Kāmran was in possession of Kabul, Hindāl of Ghazni, and Askari of Kandahār. Kāmran had also taken Badakhshān, or South Bactria, from Suleimān Mirza who had been placed there by Bābur: North Bactria, including Balkh, was in the hands of the Uzbegs. Sher Shāh was still alive, and therefore there was little to be hoped from an invasion of Hindustan.



'When they reached the fort of Garmsir, they took possession of the Garmsir territories. On arriving at Kandahār, a large body of men sallied out of the fort, and made what resistance they could, but were defeated. The siege of Kandahār went on for three months'. Bairām Khān was sent to Kabul on an embassy to Kāmran Mirza. There he had interviews with Kāmran, Hindāl, and others. Kāmran sent his envoy 'to settle terms of peace if possible'. But Mirza Askari was still intent upon fighting and holding out. The Persian forces were tired at the long duration of the siege of Kandahār, and had even thoughts of returning. But when many of the great *Begs* rallied round the Emperor, Askari lost heart and proposed to surrender. 'The Emperor in his great kindness granted him terms.'

'It had been agreed with the Persians that as soon as Kandahār was taken it should be given up to them, and now the Emperor gave them possession of it, although he possessed no other territory.....Mirza Askari having found an opportunity made his escape; but a party being sent in pursuit he was caught and brought back. His Majesty then placed him in confinement. The chiefs of the Chaghatai tribes now met in council, and resolved that under the necessities of the case, the fort of Kandahār must be taken from the Persians, and should be given up to them again after the reconquest of Kabul and Badakhshān. They entered the fort, and the Persians were over-powered. Humāyun mounted his horse and went into the city.....The Chaghatais to their great satisfaction thus obtained possession of Kandahār' (September 1545).

"The cession of Kandahār to the Persians was the price of the assistance of the Shāh," observes Elphinstone, "and by availing himself of that assistance.....he ratified the engagement anew; and his infraction of it, especially with the concomitant circumstances, must leave him under the stigma of treachery." After this, Humāyun marched to effect the conquest of Kabul, and left Bairām Khān in charge of Kandahār.

'Mirza Kāmran who had a well-equipped army, marched out with the intention of fighting; but every night parties of men deserted his army and joined Humāyun. Mirza Kāmran, being alarmed, sent a party of Sheikhs to wait upon the Emperor and ask forgiveness. The Emperor agreed to pardon him, on condition of his coming in and making his submission. Kāmran did not agree to this, but fled and shut himself up in the citadel of Kabul. All his forces came over to the side of the Emperor. On the same night Kāmran fled to Ghazni. The Emperor then entered Kabul (15 November 1545), and at night the citizens, in the extreme of joy, illuminated the whole city with lamps. On his entering the palace, Her Highness the Begam brought the young Prince Jalāl-ud-din Muhammad Akbar to his father's presence. This sight lighted up the heart of the Emperor with joy, and he offered up his thanksgivings for the reunion. The victory was accomplished on the 10th Ramzān 953 A.H., when the Prince was 4 years, 2 months, and 5 days old. The remainder of that year the Emperor spent in enjoyment at Kabul.'

In the following year, Humāyun marched to Badakhshān, for

Mirza Suleimān had disregarded the summons to come in and make his submission. Mirza Suleimān was defeated and put to flight. When Humāyun was away in Badakhshān, Kāmṛān, by a surprise attack, took possession of Kabul and Ghazni. Hearing of this, the Emperor turned towards Kabul, having put Suleimān again in charge of Badakhshān and Kunduz. Kāmṛān had taken possession of Prince Akbar, and in the fight that ensued, he made good use of this possession. 'With dastardly feeling,' writes our historian, 'he ordered that His Highness the young Prince Akbar should be exposed upon the battlements, in the place where the balls and shot of the guns and muskets fell thickest. But Maham Anka took the child in her bosom, put herself forward, and held him towards the enemy (*i.e.*, the garrison) and God Almighty preserved him.' Kāmṛān's spirit fell, and, from all parts and quarters men came in to render assistance to the Emperor. Reinforcements came from Badakhshān and Kandahār.

Mirza Kāmṛān now sued for peace, and the Emperor granted it, upon condition of his personal submission. But he was afraid to do this, and sought to make his escape. After some scrapes and adventures he sought refuge in Badakhshān. In vain he tried to get help from the Uzbeks, and when he failed in this, being very much downcast, affected repentance and expressed his desire to go to Mecca. The Emperor once more pardoned him (April 1547). 'When they met, he displayed the greatest kindness to Kāmṛān, who again received the ensigns of sovereignty. Three days they remained in the same place, and feasts and rejoicings went on. After some days, he gave the country of Kolab as an *ikta* to Kāmṛān. In June 1548, Humāyun left Kābul, with the intention of proceeding against Balkh, and summoned Kāmṛān and Askari. Though Hindāl joined him, Kāmṛān and Askari once more showed hostility, and did not come to pay their homage.

Kāmṛān had married a daughter of Shāh Husain Arghūn of Sind. When Humāyun dislodged him again, he sought help from his father-in-law, and made a fresh attempt on Kābul. In the course of this fight Hindāl met his death—19 November 1551. Finally, Kāmṛān sought refuge with Sultan Salim Shāh Sūr in Hindustan; but disgusted with the treatment he received there, he fled to the hills of Sialkot. Here he fell into the hands of Sultan Ahmad Gakkar, who sent him as captive to Humāyun. 'The Emperor in his natural humanity was ready to overlook the offences of Kāmṛān, but the officers and chiefs

of the Chaghatai clans, who had suffered many things owing to Kāmran's hostility, having agreed together, went to Humāyun, and stated that the security of the Chaghatai clans and people depended on the destruction of Kāmran Mirza, for they had repeatedly experienced the effects of his hostility. Humāyun had no escape but by consenting that he should be blinded.'

After a time the intelligence came from India of the death of Sultan Salim Sūr, and of the dissensions among the Afghans. In November 1554, the Emperor began his march. When the army encamped at Peshāwar, Bairām Khān, according to orders, came up from Kandahār, and the royal standards passed over the river Indus on the last day of that year. The governor of New Rohtas, although that fort had been strengthened, made no resistance, and fled...Humāyun continued his march towards Lahore, and when the Afghans of that city became aware of the near advance of his army, they took to flight. He entered Lahore without opposition (24 February 1555), and then sent on the nobles in command of the advance to Jalandhar and Sirhind. The districts of the Punjab, Sirhind, and Hisar, all came without a struggle into the hands of the Chāghatai forces. A body of Afghans, assembled at Dipālpur, were defeated, and their baggage and their wives and families became the prey of the victors.

'Sikander Afghan, who held possession of Delhi, sent 30,000 men under Tatar Khān and Haibat Khān to attack the advance forces in Sirhind. The Chaghatai forces concentrated at Jalandhar, and for all the numbers of the enemy and their own paucity they were ready to fight. They advanced and crossed the Sutlej.....As the sun went down a great battle began.

*Battle of Machiwārā:* 'The Afghans began the battle with their archers, but as it was getting dark, the arrows took little effect on the Mughals, but the Afghans being greatly annoyed by the fire (*atashi*) threw themselves into a neighbouring village. As most of the houses in the villages of Hindustan are thatched, a fire broke out, and lighting up the field of battle, the (Mughal) archers came out and plied their weapons heartily by the light of the burning village. The enemy in the glare of the fire, presented a fine mark for their shafts, and being unable to endure longer, took to flight.'

A great victory was gained, and elephants and much spoil fell into the hands of the victors. When the news of the victory reached Lahore, the Emperor was greatly delighted, and showed great honour to his generals. All the Punjab, Sirhind, and Hisar-Firūza were now in his possession, and some of the dependencies of Delhi also were in the hands of the Mughals.

*Battle of Sirhind*: 'On hearing of this defeat, (Sultan) Sikander Afghan marched forth to take his revenge, with 80,000 horsemen and elephants and artillery. He marched to Sirhind and there he entrenched and fortified his camp. The Chaghatai generals strengthened the fortifications of Sirhind, and making a good show of resistance, they wrote letters to Humāyun for reinforcements. Thereupon he sent Prince Akbar towards Sirhind, and as he approached, the generals came out to meet him. The forces were drawn out in array with the greatest show against the enemy, who were four times more numerous than the Mughals.

'For some days the daring spirits in both armies challenged each other to combat and displayed their valour, till at length the vanguard of Prince Akbar was drawn up for battle. A second division under Bairām Khān (*Khān-Khānan*) on the one side, and on the other a third division under Iskandar Khān.....attacked the enemy. In the engagement all the nobles exhibited dauntless courage and the most determined resolution. The Afghans, 100,000 in number, were defeated, being inferior in courage, and (Sultan) Sikander fled.

'The victors pursued the enemy and put many of them to death; and having secured an enormous booty, returned triumphant to wait upon the Emperor and congratulate him. Under his orders a despatch of the victory was drawn, in which the honour of the victory was ascribed to Prince Akbar and this was circulated in all directions.'

'*This victory,*' says Ferishta, '*decided the fate of the Empire : and the kingdom of Delhi fell forever from the hands of the Afghans.*'

Sikander Khān Uzbek was then sent on to Delhi, and the royal camp was moved to Samana. A body of Afghans in Delhi made their escape in hot haste, and Sikander Uzbek entered and occupied the city. Mir Abdul Ma'ali was sent to Lahore to keep in check Sultan Sikander, who had fled into the Siwālik mountains. 'In the month of Ramzān (23 July 1555) the Emperor entered Delhi, and once more the *khuṭbah* was read, and the coins were stamped with his name in the territories of Hindustan. The chiefs who had taken part in the campaign were most liberally rewarded, and each one was made the ruler of a province. The remainder of this year was spent in ease and enjoyment.'

From the time when Humāyun arrived in Delhi, says Erskine, "he devoted himself to a general superintendence of the affairs of his kingdom, and to watching the progress of his armies which he had sent in various directions to reduce different provinces. He saw clearly that there were great defects in the system of government of the Empire, and set himself to devising means of improving it. The plan which he projected was to separate the Empire into several great divisions, each of them to have a local capital, and a board of administration for directing local affairs. Delhi, Agra, Kanauj, Jaunpur, Māndu,

and Lahore were among the capitals fixed upon. To each of them was to be assigned a considerable military force, under an able general so as to render it independent of assistance from the others ; while the Emperor was to give unity to the whole, by visiting them in turn with an army of about 12,000 horse, which were to be under his own immediate command, and at all times ready to move in any direction. This plan, however, he never had time, had he even possessed sufficient steadiness, to carry into execution."

### *Death of Humāyun :*

' But now, the most extraordinary event occurred. On the 8th Rabi-ul awwal, at sunset, the Emperor ascended to the top of the library, and there stood for a short time. As he was descending, the *muazzin* cried aloud the summons to prayer, and he reverently sat down on the second step. When he was getting up again, his foot slipped, and he fell from the stairs to the ground. The people in attendance were greatly shocked, and the Emperor was taken up senseless, and carried into the palace. After a short time he rallied and spake. The Court physicians exerted all their powers but in vain. Next day he grew worse, and his case was beyond medical help. Sheikh Juli was sent to the Punjāb to summon Prince Akbar. On the 15th Rabiul awwal, 963 A. H. ( 24 January 1556 ), at the setting of the sun, he left this world for paradise. The date of his death is given in the line : *Humāyun bādshāh az bam uftad.*'

By a strange presentiment, as it were, some time before his death Humāyun used to repeat with deep emotion, and tears gushing from his eyes, the following mystical verses, 'which he had heard from a supernatural voice' :—

*"O Lord, of Thine infinite goodness make me Thine own ;  
Make me a partner of the knowledge of Thy attributes ;  
I am broken-hearted from the cares and sorrows of life ;  
O call to Thee Thy poor Madman (lover)  
O grant me my release !"*

### *Humāyun's Character :*

Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad, whose narrative we have mainly followed for the life of Humāyun, concludes his account of him with the following estimate of Humāyun's character :

His angelic character was adorned with every manly virtue, and in courage and heroism he excelled all the princes of his time. All the wealth of Hindustan would not have sufficed to maintain his generosity. In the sciences of astrology

and mathematics he was unrivalled. He made good verses, and all the learned and great and good of the time were admitted to his society and passed the night in his company. Great decorum was observed in his receptions, and all learned discussions were conducted in the most orderly manner. The light of favour shone upon men of ability and worth, during his reign. Such was his clemency that he repeatedly pardoned the crimes of Mirza Kāmran and the Chaghatai nobles, when they were taken prisoners and were in his power. He was particular about his ablutions and never allowed the name of God to pass from his tongue until he had performed them.

But among the contemporary estimates of Humāyun, that of his uncle Mirza Haidar will be always considered the most valuable for its intimacy as well as truthfulness. For, 'No one of my brothers or Sultans of the time, who had been in the Emperor's service,' he writes, 'had ever been honoured in such a way as I, Muhammad Haidar Kurkân, was, who being the approved friend of such a Prince as the Emperor, was not only called "brother" but was chosen as "*dast*".

'Humāyun Pādshāh was the eldest, greatest and most renowned of Bābur's sons. I have seen few persons possessed of so much natural talent and excellence as he; but in consequence of frequent intercourse with the sensual and profligate men who served him, he had contracted some bad habits; among these was his addiction to opium. All the evils that have been set down to the Emperor, and become the common talk of the people, are attributable to this vice. Nevertheless he was endowed with excellent qualities being brave in battle, gay in feast, and very generous. In short, he was a dignified stately sovereign, who observed much state and pomp. When I entered his service at Agra, it was after his defeats, and people said that, compared with what had been, there was nothing left of his pomp and magnificence. Yet, when his army was arrayed for the Ganges campaign (in which the whole direction devolved on me), there were still 17,000 menials in his retinue, from which circumstance an estimate may be formed of the rest of his establishment.'

Ferishta says, 'Humāyun was of elegant stature, and of a bronze complexion. The mildness and benevolence of Humāyun's character were excessive, if there can be excess in such noble qualities. He was a prince of great intrepidity, and possessed the virtues of charity and munificence in a very high degree. He was skilled in the science of geography, and delighted in the company of learned men. He was regular in his devotions and ablutions and never pronounced the name of God without having performed the latter ceremony. Humāyun was a prince as remarkable for his wit as for the urbanity of his manners; and for the most part, disposed to spend his time in social intercourse and pleasure. He devoted himself, however, to the sciences of astronomy and geography; and not only wrote dissertations on the

nature of the elements, but had terrestrial and celestial globes constructed for his use.

He caused seven halls of audience to be built, in which he received persons according to their rank. The first, called the *Palace of the Moon*, was set apart for ambassadors, messengers and travellers. In the second, called the *Palace of Venus*, civil officers and persons of that description, were received; and there were five other palaces for the remaining five planets. In each of these buildings he gave public audience, according to the planet of the day. The furniture and paintings of each, as also the dresses of the house-hold attendants, bore some symbol emblematic of the planet. In each of these palaces he transacted business for one day in the week.

Havell writes, "Like Bābur his education and tastes were entirely Persian,...but while Timūr and Bābur were strong individualists and men of action, never allowing themselves to be turned from any set purpose, either from the preaching of a *mulla* or the prognostications of a sooth-sayer, Humāyun was but a weak dilettante who sought the advice of the court astrologers in all state affairs....In spite of these precautions the stars in their courses fought against Humāyun...He was never wanting in personal courage, but the restoration of the Mughal dynasty was more due to the steadfast loyalty of his comrades and to the weakness of Sher Shāh's descendants, than to his own military capacity. The contrast between Sher Shāh and Humāyun could not be better illustrated than it is in the two great monuments which perpetuate their memory. Humāyun's mausoleum at Delhi portrays in its polished elegance the facile *chermeur* and rather superficial dilettante of the Persian school, whose best title to fame is that he was the father of Akbar; Sher Shāh's at Sahserām, the stern strong man, egotist and empire-builder who trampled all his enemies under foot, and ruled Hindustan with a rod of iron."

Elphinstone thought, "Though not deficient in intelligence, he had little energy; and though free from vices and violent passions, he was no less devoid of principles and affections. By nature he was more inclined to ease than ambition; yet as he had been brought up under Bābur, and accustomed to bodily and mental exertion, he never was wanting to the exigencies of his situation, or quite lost the advantages of his birth and pretensions, though he never turned them to the best account.....He was not naturally either cunning or cruel; and if he had been a limited monarch in Europe, he would most likely not have been more treacherous or bloody than Charles II."

Malleson says, "Brave, genial, witty, a charming companion, highly educated, generous, and merciful, Humāyun was even less

qualified than his father to found a dynasty on principles which should endure. Allied to his many virtues were many compromising defects. He was volatile, thoughtless, and unsteady. He was swayed by no strong sense of duty. His generosity was apt to degenerate into prodigality; his attachments into weakness. He was unable to concentrate his energies for a time in any serious direction, whilst for comprehensive legislation he had neither the genius nor the inclination. He was thus eminently unfitted to consolidate the conquest his father had bequeathed to him."

Erskine observes, "The real character of Humāyun may be better gleaned from the events of his reign than from the representations of his historians.....In the earlier part of his reign, seconded by the veteran officers and well-trained army which his father had left him, he over-ran, first the kingdoms of Mālwa and Gujarat, and next those of Bihar and Bengal, very important and glorious acquisitions; but destitute of those powers of combination which are necessary for consolidating and retaining a conquest, as bravery and a well-disciplined army are for making it, he was compelled to abandon them all; and the greater part of his reign presented a series of reverses, rebellions, and anarchy,—the fruit of his lack of political firmness and determination."

The Empire could not rest on such shifty foundations. Hence the Afghan restoration.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

- 1531 Lodi chiefs sheltered from Humāyun by Bahādur Shāh. Bahādur Shāh of Gujarat annexes Mālwa; defeats Deccani forces. Achyuta Rāya succeeds Krishnadeva Rāya. Portuguese victories at Daman and Mangalore. Last battle between Bijapur and Ahmednagar. Death of Vallabhāchārya.
- 1532 Treaty between Bengal and Gujarat. Sher Khān takes Chunar and Rohtas. Maldeo of Jodhpur regains Ajmer and Nagaur. Portuguese levy tribute from Bombay and Thāna; Bassein captured and destroyed. Humāyun's campaigns in Mālwa and Gujarat.
- 1533 Nasrat Shāh and his son Firūz successively murdered; Ghiyās-ud-dīn Mahmud's usurpation in Bengal. Bahādur Shāh raises siege of Chitor on payment of tribute.
- 1534 Death of Ismail Adil Shāh of Bijapur; his son Mallu deposed after six months. Diu fortified by the Portuguese.



A.D.

- 1535 Humāyun victorious over Bahādur ; capture of Māndu and Champaner. Deposition of Mallu and accession of Ibrāhim Adil Shāh. Anarchy in Mewar.
- 1536 Sher Khān becomes master of Bihar. da Cunha fortifies Bassein.
- 1537 Bahādur Shāh drowned.
- 1538 Death of Guru Nānak (b. 1469) ; accession of Guru Angad.
- 1539 Humāyun defeated by Sher Khān in Bengal ; Sher Shāh proclaimed King. The Society of Jesus founded.
- 1540 Humāyun finally defeated by Sher Shāh at Kanauj. Sher Shāh occupies Delhi. Mirza Haidar (Humāyun's cousin) captures Kashmir. Humāyun exiled.

## CHAPTER XI

### AFGHAN RESTORATION

"It was the rare good fortune of the house of Timur that they were able at last to regain their heritage of conquest, strengthened by the work of the Afghan Sher Shah, an administrator of marked originality, who, all unwittingly built for the Mughals that structure of administrative machinery which, while it was necessary for securing the triumph of the new ideal of kingship they represented, they had been entirely unable to construct for themselves." In this brief statement, Rushbrook-Williams has admirably summed up the place of the Afghan Restoration in the history of the Mughal Empire. Moreover, as the events of Humāyun's first reign were inextricably connected with the fortunes of Sher Shāh, his restoration and recovery of the Empire were bound up with the misfortunes of Sher Shāh's descendants. The sad contrast between Bābur's brilliance and Humāyun's political incapacity also finds a sharp echo in the Afghan episode; both pointing to the same moral for us, viz., the fatal incapacity of monarchical, like other, genius to transmit itself. We have already followed a substantial part of Sher Shāh's career, in his triumphant duel with Humāyun. Here must be attempted a more comprehensive study of his life and character.

#### *Sher Shāh's Antecedents :*

Sher Shāh was born in the reign of Sultan Bahol (1450-88) in the 'City of Victory' Hisār-Fīrūzā founded by Fīruz Shāh Tughlak. 'The grandfather of Sher Shāh, by name Ibrāhīm Khān Sūr, with his son Hasan Khān, the father of Sher Shāh, came to Hindustan from Afghanistan. . . They settled in the *pargana* of Bajwāra.' Later, Jamāl Khān Sarang Khāni of Hisar-Fīrūzā bestowed on Ibrāhīm 'several villages in *pargana* Narnaul for the maintenance of forty horsemen.' Hasan Khān entered the service of Umar Khān, *Khān-i-āzam*, who was 'counsellor and courtier of Sultan Bahlol.' Umar Khān gave 'several villages in the *pargana* of Shāhābad as a *jagir* to Hasan Khān.' After Ibrāhīm's death Hasan Khān also received his father's

*jagir* 'with several villages in addition to it.' When Jamāl Khān was sent to the *subah* of Jaunpur by Sikander Lodi (who had succeeded Bahlol), he took with him Sher Shāh's father, being 'much pleased with Hasan Khān's good service,' and 'gave him in *jagir* the *parganas* of Sāsarām, Hājipur, and Tanda, near Benares, to maintain 500 horse.'

'Hasan Khān had eight sons. Farid Khān (*Sher Shāh*) and Nizām Khān were born of one Afghan mother ;' the rest were born of slave-girls. 'Angry words often passed between Hasan and Farid.' The latter, 'annoyed with his father, went to Jamāl Khān at Jaunpur,' where he 'employed himself studying Arabic and the biographies of most of the kings of ancient times. He had got by heart the *Sikandar-Nāmā*, the *Gūlistān*, and *Bostān*, etc., and was also reading the works of the philosophers.' Subsequently, whenever, during his reign, learned men came to ask for a maintenance (*madad ma'ash*), he used to ask them about the *Hashia-i-Hindia*, and he still retained his liking for books of history and the lives of ancient kings.

'It happened after some years, that Hasan Khān came to Jamāl Khān when all his kinsmen in Jaunpur reproached him for having sent Farid away ; and they remarked that *Farid Khān, young as he was, gave promise of future greatness* ; that he bore the marks of excellence on his forehead, and that in all the tribe of Sūr there was none who possessed learning, talent, wisdom, and prudence like him ; and he had qualified himself so well, that if Hasan Khān would entrust him with the charge of a *pargana*, he could discharge it excellently well, and perfectly perform all his duties.'

When father and son were reconciled, Farid was given charge of the two *parganas* of Sāsarām and Khāwaspur (in the present District of Shāhābad). Even so early as this (1511), the future Sher Shāh gave unmistakable evidence of his executive abilities and genius. "*I shall devote myself to increase the prosperity of the district*," he said to his father, "*and that depends on a just administration.*" Abbās Khān further tells us, 'when he got to his *jagirs*, he said : "Let all the headmen (*muqaddaman*) and the cultivators (*muzzarian*) on whose labour the prosperity of the district depends, and all the village accountants (*patwaris*) attend my presence." When they came, he summoned also the soldiery, and thus addressed them :—

"My father has committed to me the power of appointing and dismissing you. I have set my heart on improving the prosperity of the district,

in which object also your own interests are concerned ; and by this means I hope to establish my reputation." When he had finished exhorting the soldiery, he turned to the peasantry and said : " This day I give you your choice as to your mode of payment. Do whatever is most advantageous to your own interests in every possible way."

'Some of the headmen asked for written agreements for a fixed money rent ; others preferred payment in kind. Accordingly he gave leases and took agreements, and fixed the payments for measuring the fields (*Jaribana*), and the fees for the tax-collectors and measurers, (*muhasilana*) ; and he said to the *chaudharis* and headmen :—

*" I know well that the cultivation depends on the humble peasants ; for if they be ill off they will produce nothing, but if prosperous they will produce much. I know the oppressions and exactions of which you have been guilty towards the cultivators ; and for this reason I have fixed the payments for measurements and the tax-gatherers' fees,—that if you exact from the cultivators more on this account than is fixed, it may not be credited to you in making up your accounts. Be it known to you, that I will take the accounts of the fees in my own presence. Whatever dues are rightly taken I will sanction, and compel the cultivators to pay them ; and I will also collect the Government dues for the autumn harvest in the autumn, and for the spring harvest in the spring ; for balances of Government dues are the ruin of a *pargana*, and the cause of quarrels between the cultivators and the Government officers. It is right for a ruler to show leniency to the cultivators at the time of measurement, and to have a regard for the actual produce ; but when the time of payment comes he should show no leniency, but collect the revenue with all strictness. If he perceives the cultivators are evading payment, he should so chastise them as to be an example to others not to act in the same way."* He then said to the peasantry, " Whatever matter you have to represent, bring it always yourselves to me. *I will suffer no one to oppress you.*" Having thus addressed them he dismissed them with honorary dresses, to carry on their cultivation. After dismissing the cultivators, he said to his father's officers, " *The cultivators are the source of prosperity. I have encouraged them and sent them away, and shall always watch over their conditions, that no man may oppress and injure them : for if a ruler cannot protect the humble peasantry from the lawless, it is tyranny to exact revenue from them.* There are certain *zamindars* who have been behaving contumaciously in these *parganas*, who have not presented themselves at the governor's court (*makhama-i-hakim*), do not pay their full revenue, and harass the villagers in their neighbourhood—how shall I overcome and destroy them?" They replied, " Most of the troops are with Mian Hasan ; wait a few days and they will return." Farid said, " I cannot have patience while they refuse to come to me, and continue to oppress and injure the people of God ; do you consider what I can contrive against these rebels, and how I may chastise them."

‘He ordered his father’s nobles to saddle 200 horses, and to see how many soldiers there were in the *pargana*, and he sent for all the Afghans and men of his tribe who were without *jagirs*, and said to them :

“I will give you subsistence and clothing till Mian Hasan returns. Whatever goods and money you may get from the plunder of these rebels is yours, nor will I ever require it of you ; and whoever among you may distinguish himself, for him I will procure a good *jagir* from Mian Hasan. I will myself give you horses to ride on.” When they had heard this they were much pleased, and said they would not fail in doing their duty under his auspices. He put the men who had engaged to serve him in good humour by all sorts of favours, and by gifts of clothes, etc., and presented them also with a little money...

‘Early in the morning, Farid Khān mounted and attacked the criminal *zamindars*, and put all the rebels to death, and making all their women and children prisoners, ordered his men to sell them as slaves ; and brought other people to the village and settled them there. When the other rebels heard of the death, imprisonment, and ruin of these, they listened to wisdom, repented of their contumacy, and abstained from theft and robbery. If any soldier or peasant had a complaint, Farid would examine it in person, and carefully investigate the cause, nor did he ever give way to carelessness or sloth. In a very short time, both *parganas* became prosperous, and the soldiery and peasantry were alike contented. When Mian Hasan heard of this he was much pleased ; and in all companies used to make mention of the prosperity of his *parganas*, the gallantry of his son, and the subjection of the *zamindars*.’

In spite of all this, however, Farid once again lost favour with his whimsical father, and for a time sought refuge at the court of Ibrāhīm Lodi at Agra, under the patronage of Daulat Khān. When that prince died on the gory field of Pānipat (April, 1526), the young adventurer went to Bahar Khān, son of Daryā Khān, who had assumed the title of Sultan Muhammad. ‘Employing himself day and night in his business, Farid gained Bahar Khān’s favour, and became one of his most intimate friends. In consequence of his excellent arrangements, he became celebrated throughout the country of Bihar.’ One day he went out hunting with Bahar Khān, and a tiger (*sher*) having been started, Farid Khān slew it. On account of this gallant encounter Bahar Khān gave him the title of “Sher Khān, the Tiger Chief.”

Sher Khān after this, getting help from Sultan Junaid Barlas, the governor of Jaunpur, sought preferment under Bābur at Agra. There, being admitted to the court, he remained for some time among the Mughals, was present at the siege of Chānderi, and 'acquainted himself with their military arrangements, their modes of governing, and the character of their nobles.' "*If luck aided me,*" he is reported to have said among the Afghans, "*and fortune stood my friend, I could easily oust the Mughals from Hindustan.*" Bābur, with his keen insight into human character, observed to Khalifā, his minister, "Keep an eye on Sher Khān, he is a clever man, and the marks of royalty are visible on his forehead. I have seen many Afghan nobles, greater men than he, but they never made any impression on me ; but as soon as I saw this man, it entered into my mind that he ought to be arrested, for I find in him the qualities of greatness and marks of mightiness."

#### *Conquest of Empire :*

Sher Khān was too circumspect a man to miss the significance of this observation. So he quitted Bābur's camp at the earliest opportunity. "I have no longer any confidence in the Mughals, nor they in me," he declared, "I must go to Sultan Muhammad Khān." When Sultan Muhammad died, Sher Khān became the Deputy to his son Jalāl Khān, in the Government of Bihar and its dependencies, about October 1529. The following year (1530) Sher Khān *captured the important fortress of Chunar. . . This may be considered the starting point of his career of aggression.* The manner in which he came by it is thus described by Abbās Sarwāni :—

'Sultan Ibrāhīm Lodi had entrusted the fort of Chunar to Tāj Khān Sarang Khāni, and the royal treasures were deposited in the fort. Now this Tāj Khān was altogether a slave to his love for his wife Lād Malikā, who was a woman of great sagacity and wisdom. One night, Tāj Khān's eldest son (by another wife) wounded Lād Malikā with a sabre, but not severely. Her servants complained to Tāj Khān, who drew his sword, and ran out to kill his son. He, perceiving that his father was about to kill him for the sake of his wife, struck his father with his sabre, and escaped out of the house. Tāj Khān died of the wound.' Sher Khān, after this incident, cleverly ingratiated himself with Lād Malikā and married her. By this means he not only got possession of the fort, but 'she gave him a present consisting of 150 of the exceedingly valuable jewels, and 7 *mans* of pearls and 150 *mans* of gold, many other articles and ornaments.'

Subsequent to this, Sher Khān also got into his power and possession the *parganas* near the fort of Chunar, and further strengthened his resources by inheriting 60 *mans* of gold from Guhar Husain, the widow of Nāsir Khān.

When Humāyun had overcome Sultan Mahmūd Lodi, and put the greater number of his followers to death, at the battle of Daurōh, he sent Hindu Beg to take Chunar from Sher Khān, but the latter refused to give it up. Jauhār says, 'When the victorious army of the Mughals reached Chunar, Jalāl Khān, son of Sher Khān, and several other nobles were within the fortress; the fortress was besieged for four months. When Sher Khān saw that the fort would fall to-day or to-morrow, he made his submission and sent his own son, Kutb Khān, to the presence of His Majesty (Humāyun) and secured peace.' Thus he put off Humāyun for the time being with clever but insincere professions of loyalty. Humāyun withdrew and turned towards Gujarat, with a false sense of security in the eastern provinces. "Never were the eastern provinces rendered so submissive to the throne of Delhi after the death of Sultan Sikandar (1517) as now," writes Professor Qanungo. "The indomitable Afghan leaders, Baban and Bāyazid, were killed; the country on the northern bank of the Ganges from the Gumti to the Gandak (boundary of the kingdom of Bengal) was as tranquil as ever. On the southern bank of the Ganges the pretensions of Sher Khān were subdued, and he was forced to yield obedience and send his son to the imperial service. But the serpent was scotched, not killed; and this foreboded future trouble. When Humāyun was reposing in the bed of fancied security, it recovered from the shock and gathered fresh strength. The seed of life-long enmity was sown between the two men."

*Bihar and Bengal*: To resume Abbās Khān's narrative, 'Sher Khān took advantage of this opportunity, and did not leave one enemy of his remaining throughout the kingdom of Bihar. He also began to patronise all Afghans. Many of them who had assumed the garb of religious mendicants on account of their misfortunes, he relieved and enlisted as soldiers; and some who refused to enlist, and preferred a life of mendicancy, he put to death, and declared *he would kill every Afghan who refused to be a soldier*. He was also very careful of his Afghans in action, that their lives might not be uselessly sacrificed. When the Afghans heard that Sher Khān was eagerly desirous of patronising their race, they entered into his ser-

vice from all directions. Sultan Bahādur (of Gujarat) being defeated by Humāyun, went towards Surat, and the whole of Afghans who were in his service, whether chiefs or common soldiers, came to Sher Khān.

‘When Nasir Khān (Nusrat Shāh) ruler of Bengal died, the nobles of Bengal made Sultan Mahmūd his successor ; but he was not able to manage the kingdom, and it fell into disorder. Mahmūd Shāh, nevertheless, conceived the design of conquering Bihar from the Afghans, and accordingly despatched Kutb Khān with a large force for that purpose. Sher Khān earnestly and repeatedly remonstrated ; but Kutb Khān gave no heed to his remonstrances. Sher Khān consequently told his Afghans, “With the Mughals on one side, and the army of Bengal on the other, we have no recourse save in our own bravery.” The Afghans replied, “Be of good cheer, for we will fight to the utmost ; we will never yield the field until we either conquer or die.”

‘Sher Khān having prepared for a sturdy resistance, met the enemy. A severe action ensued in which the Bengal army was defeated. . . . Of the treasure, horses, elephants, etc., which fell into his hands, Sher Khān did not give any part to the Lohānis, and so he became a man of wealth. This kindled the jealousy of the Lohānis, who thereafter became the enemies of Sher Khān. They tried to bring about his fall in several ways, not excluding murder. When they were foiled in their attempts, they won over Jalāl Khān (Sher Khān’s nominal sovereign) to their side, and even intrigued with their enemy the King of Bengal. The Lohānis as a tribe were the rivals of the Sūrs. Sher Khān himself stated : “The Lohānis are a much stronger and more powerful tribe than the Sūrs ; and the custom of the Afghan is, that if any man has four kinsmen more than another, he thinks little of killing or dishonouring his neighbour.”

‘As soon as Sher Khān heard that Jalāl Khān had gone over to the King of Bengal, he was much pleased, and said :

“I felt certain that the army of the King of Bengal would assuredly come to attempt the conquest of Bihar, and as enmity existed between the Lohānis and myself, I feared lest the enemy should be victorious, for *the surest means of defeat are divisions in your own army*. Now that the Lohānis are gone to Bengal, there are no quarrels in my army ; and if there be no divisions among the Afghans, how can the Bengal army compare with them in the day of battle ? Even the Mughals cannot equal



them. Please God, when I have dispersed the Bengal army, you will soon see, if I survive, how I will expel the Mughals from Hindustan."

Events showed that these calculations of Sher Khān were not wrong. 'After this Sher Khān began to strengthen himself, and enlist more men. Wherever there were any Afghans he sent for them, and gave them any money they asked. Having collected a very large force, and made every preparation, and having gained the goodwill of his army, he placed the country of Bihar in his rear, and proceeded against the King of Bengal, "*This campaign*," says Prof. Qanungo, "*was destined to end in one of the most decisive battles of the medieval history of India. It was a turning point in the career of Sher Shāh.*" The following account of the engagement is given by Abbās Khān :—

*Battle of Surājgahr* : 'When one watch of the night was yet remaining, Sher Khān arrayed his forces, and brought them out of their entrenchments ; and after the morning prayers, he himself came out, and said to his chiefs, "In the enemy's army there are many elephants and guns, and a great force of infantry ; we must fight them in such a manner that they shall not be able to preserve their original order. The Bengal cavalry should be drawn away from their guns and infantry, and the horses intermingled with the elephants so that their array may be disordered. I have thought of a stratagem by which to defeat the Bengalis. I will draw up the greater part of my forces behind the cover of that height which we see, but will retain for the attack a small number of experienced and veteran horse. Now, they will fight exactly in the same manner as they did on the former occasion, without any expectation of defeat. I will bring up my selected division, who after discharging one flight of arrows on the Bengali army, shall retreat. The enemy is presumptuous on account of his superior force. He will think the Afghans are beginning to fly ; and becoming eager, he will leave his artillery and foot in the rear, and press on with all expedition himself, and disorder and confusion will find their way into his order of battle. I will then bring out my force which had been concealed behind the eminence, who will attack the enemy. The Bengali cavalry, deprived of the support of their artillery and infantry, are by themselves unable to cope with the Afghan horse. I hope by the favour of God that their force will be routed and put to flight.

The result was just what Sher Khān had so shrewdly anticipated. 'The whole of the treasure, elephants, and train of artillery fell into the hands of Sher Khān, who was thus supplied with munitions of war, and became master of the kingdom of Bihar, and much other territory besides. *Since God, the most holy and omnipotent, had preordained from all eternity to give the kingdom of Hind to Sher Khān, and that people of the Lord should live in ease and comfort*

*under the shadow of his justice, and that he should be a zealous and just ruler, his wealth daily increased, and the whole country gradually came into his possession.'*

In the beginning of May 1535, Sher Khān again turned upon Mahmūd Shāh, and began a war of conquest of his territories on the frontier of Bihar. 'This came as a complete surprise to the incapable voluptuary who disgraced the throne of mighty rulers like Husain Shāh and Nusrat Shāh. Sher Khān's plan of campaign was one of slow, methodical conquest and annexation. His object was to wrest all the territories from Mahmūd Shāh on this side of Teliagarhi.' Mahmūd Shāh bought him off for the time being with an indemnity of 13,00,000 gold pieces, even against the advice of his Portuguese allies. Encouraged by this, Sher Khān once more led a powerful army into Bengal in 1537. From the Portuguese historians we learn that Sher Khān sent his lieutenants to occupy outlying districts like Chitagong, while he himself invested Gaur, the capital of Bengal. These activities of Sher Khān invited Humāyun's attention towards him. Abu-l Faḍl says, 'Meanwhile news came of the emergence of Sher Khān and of his commotions in the eastern provinces... Orders were issued to make preparations for an expedition to Bengal. It was decided that Sher Khān should be put down and the territories of Bengal should be subdued.' We have already followed the course of subsequent events. Sher Khān defeated Humāyun at Chaunsa, in 1539, and assumed the title of Sher Shāh; *at the battle of Bilgrām, in 1540, Humāyun was finally routed and expelled out of the Empire.*

Here we might notice one incident which, like the Fath Malikā story, throws light upon the machiavellian character of Sher Shāh. It is the manner in which he took possession of the great fort of Rohtas :

Sher Khān was in difficulties owing to the capture of Chunar by Humāyun. 'There existed a friendly connexion between Sher Khān and the Rāja of the fort of Rohtas, and Churāman, the Rāja's *nāib*, was on particular terms of intimate friendship and alliance with Sher Khān. This Churāman was a Brāhmaṇ and had formerly shown kindness to the family of Sher Khān's brother Nizām, and procured them shelter in the fort of Rohtas... On the present occasion Sher Khān wrote that he was in great straits, and that if the Rāja would give him the loan of the fort for a short time he would be obliged to him all his days, and that when all danger was past, he would again restore the fort... Sher Khān also gave to Churāman a bribe of 6 *mans* of gold, and said, "Persuade in any way you can the

Rāja to give me the loan of his fort for a few days for my family ; but if he will not give it, then I will go and make my peace with the Emperor Humāyun, and will revenge myself on everything belonging to the Rāja." . . . . When the Rāja finally consented, Sher Khān treacherously ordered his own men, if the guards did not obey the order to leave the fort, to eject them by force. . . . Sher Khān placed his own guards and sentries in every part of the fort, and drove the Rāja away from the fort. In the manner thus described he got possession of the fort of Rohtas. The commonly received report that Sher Khān put Afghans into *dolis* and sent them into the fort as women, is altogether erroneous and false,' writes Abbās Sarwāni ; 'for I, the writer of this history, . . . have inquired of several chiefs and nobles who were with Sher Khān in the affair.'

The strategy, whatever the details thereof, was probably justified by the importance of the place. For, after taking possession of the fort, Sher Khān observed, "*The fort of Chunar is no fort in comparison with this ; as that has gone out of my possession, this has come into it. I was not so pleased at the conquest of Gour as I am at getting possession of Rohtas.*" Sher Khān was the first Muslim conqueror of this fort ; he not only secured in it a safe retreat for the Afghan families but also came into possession of the vast treasures which had been accumulated there for ages by the Hindu kings. Prof. Qanungo thinks it must have come into Sher Khān's possession in March 1538. An admirable summary of Sher Khān's relations with Humāyun—though only from the Afghan point of view—up to the battle of Chaunsa, is contained in his address to his army just before that engagement. Assembling all his chiefs, he said :

"I have promised peace to the Emperor Humāyun ; but I have considered that all the good service I have rendered has produced no good fruit ; and after all my loyalty to him. . . , he demanded from me the fort of Chunar. When I refused to yield it, he sent a force to take it ; and when that failed, he came himself to seize it by force, but abandoned his intentions when he heard that Mirza Muhammad Zamān had escaped from prison, and had raised sedition in the country. Moreover Sultan Bahādur, King of Gujarat, was coming to invade the country of Delhi and so he was compelled to return. I sent my son Kutb Khān with him throughout the Gujarat campaign, accompanied by 500 valiant horsemen skilled in the use of the sabre. Though I could have taken possession of the country of Jaunpur, etc., yet I did not commit any act of hostility, for the Emperor is mighty ; and though I had the power, I would not do any disloyal and evil act, that the Emperor might perceive I was his faithful servant, and desist from seeking to injure me. When he returned from Gujarat, he got his army in readiness, and without regarding my loyalty, did his best to expel me ; but as my fortune was great, he did not achieve his desire. I made every submission, but it was all profitless. When in violation of

all his promises, he attacked Bengal, I lost all hope in his goodness, and apprehending evil from him, was compelled to declare hostilities against him, and I expelled his governors and spoiled his country as far as Sāmbhal, and have not left a single Mughal in these parts. Now with what hope can I conclude this peace with him? He makes peace and manifests a friendly disposition towards me, because his army is in want of horses and cattle and of every equipment, and because his brothers have rebelled against him. He is but playing with me, and eventually will not abide by this peace; but having appeased the rebellion of his brother on his arrival at Agra, and refurnished his army, he will not fail to uproot and destroy me. *I have often experienced that the Afghans are braver in battle than the Mughals, who only got the country from the dissensions of the Afghans.* If my brothers advise so, I will break off the peace, and will try my fortune."

Events, as we have seen, stood by Sher Shāh's fortune. *Chaunsa and Bilgrām gave the Empire of Humāyun to his Afghan rival. Bābur's wise declaration came true: 'The world is his who exerts himself.'* We must now follow the rest of Sher Shāh's brilliant career.

*Pursuit of Humāyun:* 'Sher Shāh being at his ease regarding the Mughals, wrote to Suja'at Khān, whom he had left as *jaujdar*, in the country of Bihar and Rohtas, to besiege the fort of Gwalior. . . . As soon as he received the *firmān*, Suja'at Khān went and besieged Gwalior. From Kanauj Sher Shāh despatched Barmazid Gur with a large force in advance, but directed him not to hazard an engagement with the Emperor Humāyun, and he also sent another force under Nāsir Khān towards Sāmbhal. Having speedily settled the country about Kanauj, he betook himself in the direction of Agra. 'When Sher Shāh approached Agra, the Emperor, unable to remain there, fled towards Lahore. Sher Shāh was greatly displeased at this, and on his arrival at Agra sent Khāwas Khān and Barmazid Gur in the direction of Lahore, with a large force to pursue the Emperor.

'On arriving at Delhi, the principal men and inhabitants of the city of Sāmbhal came and complained that Nāzir Khān had oppressed and tyrannised over them in various ways. Sher Shāh, therefore, despatched Isā Khān, as a person endowed both with valour and justice, and placed Nāsir Khān under him. After this, Sher Shāh breathed a sigh of relief, and said, "I am now at my ease regarding the whole country from Delhi to Lucknow." Entrusting Mewat to Hāji Khān, he then proceeded towards Lahore. . . . On the third march beyond Lahore, he heard that Mirza Kāmran had gone by

way of the Judh hills to Kabul, and that the Emperor Humāyun was marching along the banks of the Indus to Multan and Bhakkar. The King (Sher Shāh) went to Khushab, and thence despatched Khāwas Khān... and the greater part of the army, in pursuit of the Emperor, towards Multan. He instructed them not to engage the Emperor but to drive him beyond the borders of the kingdom, and then to return. The Mughal division which had quitted the Emperor, and was marching towards Kabul, encountered Khāwas Khān, not being strong enough to fight, fled leaving their drums and standards behind, which fell into Khāwas Khān's hands, and the Afghan army returning from that place rejoined Sher Shāh.'

*Baluchi and Gakkar* : 'Sher Shāh delayed some time at Khushab. While there, Ismail Khān, Fath Khān, and Ghāzi Khān Baluchi came and waited on him... Sher Shāh confirmed Ismail Khān in the country of Sind. The chiefs of every tribe and family of Roh came to wait on him; and Sher Shāh wisely left these Baluchi chiefs undisturbed in their possessions. Then he marched with all his forces and retinue, through all the hills of Padman and Garjhak, in order that he might choose a fitting site and build a fort there to keep down the Gakkars, in which he might leave a garrison on the Kabul road, when he himself returned. Having selected Rohtas, he built there the fort which now exists, and laid waste the country of the Gakkars.'

Burns considered this one of the greatest bulwarks between Tartary and India. The imperfectly subdued Gakkars 'made a vow among themselves that no one should serve as day-labourer in the construction of the fort. If any one act to the contrary, he must be destroyed. . . Todar Mal (who later became so very famous in the reign of Akbar) complained of it to Sher Shāh, who wrote in reply, that they should go on with the building though they paid for the stone its weight in copper. The fort was completed though the expenses were enormous. Sher Shāh called it 'Little Rohtas'. The *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* calls it 'New Rohtas', and adds, that it 'cost 8 *krors*, 5 thousand, and 2½ *dāms*, which means *Bahlolis*—all which is written over the gate of the fort.'

*Bengal* : 'In the midst of this, news came from Bengal that Khizr Khān, the governor of Bengal, had assumed the dignity of a king and defied his authority. So he set out himself for Bengal.' There, "instead of placing the whole province under one military governor, as had hitherto been the custom, Sher Shāh created several small governorships. The governors placed over these divisions were

equal in status, and wholly independent of one another, in the administration of their respective areas. They were all directly appointed by him and were responsible to him alone. By this single stroke of policy, he struck at the very root of the evil of chronic rebellion." He remained in Bengal for about seven months, from June 1541 to January 1542. Then he returned to Agra.

*Mālwa* : In April 1542, Sher Shāh marched towards Māndu by way of Gwalior, in order to wreak on the rulers of Māndu his revenge for their backwardness in assisting Kutb Khān. Apart from this, Prof. Qanungo assigns two more political motives : (i) To come into direct touch with the kingdoms of Gujarat and Mewar, through which the Mughals might break into Mālwa ; (ii) to forestall the design of Maldeo in Mālwa and crush Maldeo's prospective allies before they could cause serious trouble. Mallu Khān who had assumed the title of king and the name of Kādir Shāh, held possession and rule of the city of Shadmābad, that is to say, the fort of Māndu, and of Ujjain, Sārangpur and the fort of Rantambhor. When Sher Shāh reached Sārangpur, Mallu Khān came and submitted. He was much impressed with the rigour, discipline and exertions of Sher Shāh's army, and said to the Afghans, "You submit yourselves to wonderful labours and exertions ; night and day you have no rest ; ease and comfort are things forbidden to you." The Afghans replied, "Such is our master's custom. It behoves a soldier, whatever service his chief may order, or whatever labour or exertion he may require, not to consider it a hardship. *Ease is for women, it is shameful to honourable men.*" Sher Shāh assigned the country of Māndu to Suja'at Khān...and then returned to Agra, via Dhār and Rantambhor.'

*Raisin* : From Agra he went towards Bihar and Bengal, where he suffered an attack of fever and ague. After recovery he once again returned to Agra. When he arrived there, in all the pride of his state, he set off for the country of Māndu, in the year 950 A.H. (1548 A. D.), and took the fort of *Raisin*. This expedition, according to Abbās Khān, had been provoked by the oppression of Musalman families by its Rāja Puran Mal. But Prof. Qanungo definitely says, "It was not undertaken out of a religious motive to punish Puran Mal for enslaving the families of the Muslims of Chanderi as the bigoted Muslim historians fondly believed. No incentive of fanaticism was necessary, as the political object was a sufficient stimulant

to move Sher Shāh against Raisin. . . One single fort unsubdued might overturn an empire, as Sher Shāh could realise by contemplating the fate of Humāyun. So he determined to safeguard himself against unknown dangers by rooting out Rajput influence in Mālwa." Whatever might have been the motive or incentive for the attack, Puran Mal and his companions, Abbās Khān proceeds to tell us, 'like hogs at bay, failed not to exhibit valour and gallantry ; but in the twinkling of an eye all were slain. Such of their wives and families as were not slain were captured. . . . He made over the fort of Raisin to Munshi Shāhbhāz Khān Sarwāni, and returned himself towards Agra, and remained at the capital during the rainy season.'

*Sind and Multan* : About the same time as the fall of Raisin, Sind and Multan were conquered by Sher Shāh's general, Haibat Khān Niazi. The turbulent Baluchis were ever a source of danger to Multan. The conquest of these parts was of utmost importance for Sher Shāh. More than anything else it closed the route to Kandahār, *via* Siwi, against Humāyun, by strengthening Sakkar and Bhakkar to which he gave the name of Shergarh. The conquest was completed by November 1543.

*Rajputāna* : 'After the conclusion of the rains, Sher Shāh ordered that his conquering forces, beyond all calculation or enumeration, should under the shadow of his victorious standards, march towards the country of Nagaur, Ajmer and Jodhpur, which belonged to Maldeo the Rāja with whom Humāyun had sought shelter in vain.

'When he approached the enemy, Sher Shāh contrived a stratagem ; and having written letters in the name of Maldeo's nobles to this effect, viz., "Let not the King permit any anxiety or doubt to find its way to his heart. During the battle we will seize Maldeo and bring him to you" ; and having inclosed these letters in a *kharita* or silken bag, he gave it to a certain person, and directed him to go near to the tent of the *vakūl* of Maldeo, and remain there ; and when he went out, to drop the *kharita* on his way, and conceal himself. Sher Shāh's agent did as he was ordered ; and when the *vakūl* of Maldeo saw the *kharita* lying, he picked it up, and sent the letters to Maldeo. When the latter learned their contents, he was much alarmed, and fled without fighting. Although his nobles took oaths of fidelity, he did not heed them. Some of the chieftains, such as Jaya Chand and Goha, and others, came and attacked Sher Shāh, and displayed exceeding valour. Part of the army was routed, and a certain Afghan came to Sher Shāh, and advised him in his native tongue saying, "Mount, for the infidels are routing your army." Sher Shāh was performing his morning devotions, and reading the *Musta' abi-i ashri*. He gave no

reply to the Afghan. By a sign he ordered his horse, and mounted, when news of victory was brought to the effect that Khāwas Khān had slain Jaya and Goha with all their forces. When Sher Shāh learnt of the valour and gallantry of these men, he exclaimed, '*I had nearly lost the kingdom of Delhi, for a handful of bhajra (millet seed).*'

This occurred about March 1544. 'He left Khāwas Khān and Isā Khān Niazi and some other chiefs in the country of Nagaur, and himself withdrew. Khāwas Khān founded a city in his own name, near the fort of Jodhpur, and brought into his power and possession the whole country of Nagaur and Ajmer, the fort of Jodhpur, and the districts of Mārwar. Maldeo went to the fort of Siwāna, on the borders of Gujarat.' Sher Shāh, to allay misgivings, paid a flying visit to his capital, and rejoined his camp at Ajmer, about the middle of June 1544.

*Chitor* : Next he turned to Chitor. Mewar at this time was utterly prostrate ; she seemed to have no more blood left to shed in defence of her capital. It was one of the darkest periods in the history of Rajputāna. The bastard Banabīr, whom the disaffected nobles of Mewar had raised to the throne, had murdered the de-throned Bikramjīt, and would have done the same with the infant Udai Singh, but for his nurse Panna's noble sacrifice. The boy had been installed only two years before Sher Shāh invaded. No wonder that 'when he was yet 12 *kos* from the fort of Chitor, the Rāja who was its ruler sent him the keys. When Sher Shāh came to Chitor he left in it the younger brother of Khāwas Khān, Mian Ahmad Sarwāni and Hasan Khān Khalji. Sher Shāh himself marched towards Kachwāra, and thence to Kālinjar.

*Kālinjar* : 'The Rāja of Kālinjar, Kirāt Singh, did not come out to meet him. So Sher Shāh ordered the fort to be invested, and threw up mounds against it, and in a short time the mounds rose so high that they overtopped the fort. The men who were in the streets and houses were exposed, and the Afghans shot them with their arrows and muskets from off the mounds. The cause of this tedious mode of capturing the fort was this : Among the women of Rāja Kirāt Singh was a Patar slave-girl, i. e., a dancing-girl. The King had heard exceeding praise of her, and he considered how to get possession of her, for he feared lest, if he stormed the fort, the Rāja Kirāt Singh would certainly make a *jauhār*, and would burn the girl.'



"The fortress of Kālinjar was besieged about the beginning of November 1544 A.D. The natural strength of the fort was such as to baffle any attempt to storm it. The hill on which the fort stands has an elevation of 1230 ft. above the sea, and is isolated from the adjacent range by a chasm or ravine about 1,200 yds. wide. The sides rise rather steeply from the plain, and in the upper part have a nearly perpendicular face of 150 or 180 ft. in height, and in most places inaccessible. The fortifications are massively constructed of large blocks of stone laid generally without cement and about 35 ft. thick."

'On Friday, the 9th Rabiul awwal 952 A. H. when one watch and two hours of the day were over, Sher Shāh called for his breakfast, and ate with his *ulema* and priests, without whom he never breakfasted. In the midst of his breakfast, Sheikh Nizām said, "'There is nothing equal to a religious war against the infidels. If you be slain, you become a martyr; if you live, you become a *ghāzi*.'" When Sher Shāh had finished eating his breakfast, he ordered Daryā Khān to bring loaded shells, and went up to the top of a mound and with his own hand shot off many arrows, and said, "Daryā Khān comes not; he delays very long." But when the shells were at last brought, Sher Shāh came down from the mound and stood where they were placed. While the men were employed in discharging them, by the will of God Almighty, one shell full of gun-powder struck on the gate of the fort and broke, and came and fell where a great number of other shells were placed. Those which were loaded began to explode. Sheikh Halil, Sheikh Nizām, and other learned men, and most of the others who escaped were not burnt; but they brought out Sher Shāh partially burnt. A young princess who was standing by the rockets was burnt to death.

'When Sher Shāh was carried into his tent, all his nobles assembled in *darbār*; and he sent for Isā Khān Hajib and Masnad Khān Kalkapur, the son-in-law of Isā Khān and the paternal uncle of the author (Abbās Khān), to come into his tent, and ordered them to take the fort while he was yet alive. When Isā Khān came out and told the chiefs that it was Sher Shāh's order that they should attack on every side and capture the fort, men came and swarmed out instantly on every side like ants and locusts; and by the time of afternoon prayers captured the fort, putting everyone to the sword, and sending all the infidels to hell. About the hour of evening prayers, the intelligence of the victory reached Sher Shāh, and marks of joy and pleasure appeared on his countenance.

'On the 10th Rabiul awwal 952, A. H. (22 May 1545 A.D.) Sher Shāh went from the hostel of this world to rest in the mansion of happiness, and ascended peacefully from the abode of this world to the lofty heavens; the date was discovered in the words *az atash*

*murd*, he died from fire.' It is not certain whether Sher Shāh's body was buried at Kālinjar, or removed to the grand mausoleum erected by himself at *Sāsarām*—the home of his greatness. He had reigned for six months as King of Bengal and Jaunpur, and for five years as the Emperor of Hindustan. He might have been sixty years of age at the time of his death. "Thus passed away in the mid-career of victory and beneficent activity the great soldier and statesman, with whom there appeared for the persecuted Hindus the dawn of that era of toleration, justice, and equality of political rights, which broadened into dazzling noon on the accession of Akbar."

*Sher Shāh's Genius :*

Sher Shāh was, according to all estimates, a man of varied talents and extraordinary genius. It would not be unfair to compare him with Henry VII in his dealings with the feudal nobility ; with Frederick William I—Prussia's greatest 'internal king'—in the care he bestowed upon both military organisation and civil administration ; with Kautalya and Machiavelli in his practical outlook and political principles ; and Asoka in his benevolent intentions and solicitude for the welfare of all classes of his subjects. In fact, he was a combination of Bābur and Frederick the Great of Prussia. Erskine writes : "Sher Shāh was one of the most extraordinary men whose name appears in the history of India. His character has been represented in very different lights by different authors. As he was long the grand enemy of the house of Timūr, whom for a time he drove out of India, by their partisans he has been drawn in very unfavourable colours. But the evidence of less prejudiced writers, and of facts, must restore to him the high praise and honourable distinction that, with all the imperfections of his character, are justly his due."

A narrative of Sher Shāh's life, such as the one we have attempted above, is the best commentary on his character that any one can offer. Apart from his undoubted genius, the outstanding quality that explains his success was his capacity for incessant activity. "For," said he, "it behoves the great to be always active, and they should not consider, on account of the greatness of their dignity and loftiness of their rank, the affairs and business of the kingdom, small or petty."

The *Wakiat-i-Mushtaki* gives the following account of the daily routine of Sher Shāh's busy life :—' Sher Shāh was occupied night and day with the business of his kingdom, and never allowed himself to be idle. At the end of night he arose, performed his ablutions, and said his prayers.

Afterwards he called in his officers and managers to report all the occurrences of the day. Four hours he listened to the reading of reports on the affairs of the country or on business of the Government establishments. The orders which he gave were reduced to writing, and were issued and acted upon ; there was no need of further discussion. Thus he remained engaged till morning arrived. When it was time for prayers, he performed his devotions in a large congregation, and went through all the forms of prayer. Afterwards he received his nobles and soldiers, and made inquiries as to the horses brought to receive their brands. Then he went out and made a personal inspection of his forces, and settled the allowances of each individual by word of mouth until all was arranged. He then attended to many other affairs and audited accounts. Petitions were received from every quarter, and replies were sent ; he himself dictated them in Persian, and the scribes committed them to writing. Every person who came to wait upon him was received in the palace.'

The incentive for such activity was, no doubt, his great ambition ; but it was an ambition conceived by his national patriotism engendered by his early studies and experience. When his father's unfair treatment drove him to Jaunpur, he utilised the time in studying history, philosophy, and the biographies of ancient kings. 'Subsequently,' Abbās Khān informs us, 'whenever during his reign, learned men came to ask him for a maintenance, he used to ask them about the *Hashia-i Hindia*, and he still retained his liking for books of history and the lives of ancient kings.' When he was appointed to the administration of his father's *jagirs*, he carried with him a high but modest sense of duty. "To please you I accept the management of the two districts. I will not fail to do my duty to the best of my power. . . . I shall devote myself to increase the prosperity of the districts, and that depends on a just administration." His tenure as *jagirdar*, short though it was, revealed his practical genius, as well as his great love for the welfare of the people entrusted to his care,—particularly the peasants. He always liked the company of the religious and the learned. Abbās Khān tells us, he never breakfasted except in the company of the *ulema*. But in moments of action, he was his own best counsel. His unique sense of justice was a part of the man himself that determined the character of his administration. He was above all, and essentially, a man of destiny who had faith in himself and faith in God who seemed to have marked him out for the success that he achieved.

After the final discomfiture and dispersal of the enemy, he returned to the Imperial tents dismounted in the hall of audience, and humbly prostra-

ted himself in prayer to the Giver of all Victory. "He did not now hesitate to declare a dream which he had on the preceding night. He thought that he and Humāyun were both carried into the presence of the Prophet of God, who was sitting in state on a throne, and who, addressing the Emperor, told him that the Almighty had bestowed his kingdom on Sher Shāh ; and, at the same time, taking the crown and cap of authority from his head, placed them on that of his rival, commanding him to rule with justice."

Genius has been defined as a happy mixture of luck, audacity, and infinite capacity to take pains. This is particularly true with regard to military achievement. Successful generalship, as Humāyun's failures amply demonstrated, required many other qualities besides personal courage. Above everything else, it required shrewd insight into human nature, resourcefulness, and a clear grasp of realities. The uniform success of Sher Shāh showed the presence in him of all these qualities. By way of illustration, we might recall here a few instances.

(i) The resolute manner in which he brought under control the recalcitrant *zamindars* on his father's estates was the first evidence he gave of his consummate ability to restore order in those troubled times.

There were some *zamindars* who had committed all sorts of offences, such as theft and highway robbery, and refusing to pay revenue, never came to the governor's presence, but were insolent from confidence in their numbers. Although these were often warned, they took no heed. Farid collected his forces, and commanded that every one of his villagers who had a horse should come riding upon it, and that he who had not a horse should come on foot. And he took with him half his own soldiers, and the other half he employed in collecting revenue and other local duties. When the soldiers and peasants were assembled, he marched towards the villages of the recusants, and at a distance of a *kos* threw up an earthen entrenchment, and ordered them to cut down the neighbouring jungle. His horsemen he directed to petrol round the villages ; to kill all men they met, and to make prisoners of the women and children ; to drive in the cattle, to permit no one to cultivate the fields, to destroy crops already sown, and not to permit any one to bring anything from the neighbouring parts, nor to allow any one of them to carry anything out of the village, and not to permit a soul to go out. His footmen he also ordered to cut down the jungle. When the jungle was all cut down he marched from his former position, and made another entrenchment nearer the village, and occupied it. The rebels were humbled, and sent a representative saying, that if Farid Khān would pardon their fault, they would submit. Farid Khān replied that he would not accept their submission, and there could be nothing but hostility between him and them : to whichever God might

please, He would give the victory. Although the rebels humbled themselves in every way, and offered to pay a large sum of money, yet Farid Khān would not accept the money, but said to his men :—" This is the way of these rebels : first they fight and oppose their ruler : if they find him weak, they persist in their rebelliousness ; but if they see that he is strong, they come to him deceitfully, and humble themselves and agree to pay a sum of money, and so they persuade their ruler to leave them alone ; but as soon as they find an opportunity, they return to their evil ways."

'When the other rebels heard of the death, imprisonment, and ruin of these, they listened to wisdom, repented of their contumacy, and abstained from theft and robbery.'

(ii) A second instance where Sher Shāh showed his abilities as a general was when he fought the forces of Bengal. Ibrāhim Khān, the Bengali general, commanded vastly superior numbers, and possessed, besides many elephants, a park of artillery. But, Sher Khān who was a better commander made up for all these by his skill and resourcefulness. After a few days' skirmishing, he called together his men and said :—

" I have for some time abstained from meeting the Bengalis in the open field, and have kept myself sheltered under entrenchments, lest our men should be discouraged by the large numbers of the enemy. Now I am convinced that the Bengalis are much inferior to the Afghans in war... I will now engage in open battle, for without a general engagement we cannot destroy and disperse our enemies. Praise be to God, whenever such an engagement occurs between Afghans and Bengalis, the Afghans must prevail. It is impossible that the Bengalis can stand against them. At present this is my purpose. Tomorrow morning, if you concur with me, hoping in the mercy of the Protector, and trusting on this text— 'By God's command the lesser number overcomes the greater,' I will engage the enemy in open battle, for it behoves us not to delay or be backward in this matter, as reinforcements will soon reach them." The Afghans replied : "That which your noble mind has determined is extremely right."

(iii) The manœuvres by which Sher Shāh encompassed the ruin of Humāyun were master-pieces of military strategy. For details the reader is referred to the descriptions of the battles of Chaunsa and Bilgrām. Although there was a uniformity in the tactics employed by Sher Shāh on both the occasions, Humāyun was too dull to profit by experience.

(iv) To economise in his men, and not to waste them in avoidable encounters was with Sher Shāh a constant principle. This often led him to attain his ends through means too open to moral censure.

The acquisition of Chunar, Rohtas, and Raisin are examples of treacherous conduct—though not infrequent in that Machiavellian age—which cast a deep shadow on Sher Shāh's otherwise fair reputation. His ruse of the forged letters in the case of Maldeo is of a piece with this unscrupulous behaviour, that sometimes passes in the name of political adroitness. Nevertheless, these actions seem to have originated chiefly from Sher Shāh's extreme reluctance to shed the blood of his own men needlessly. No wonder, therefore, that his men put their utmost trust in him. He inspired confidence in his soldiers by repeatedly telling them that 'the Mughals are not superior to the Afghans in battle or single combat ; but the Afghans have let the Empire of Hind slip from their hands on account of their internal dissensions.' His successive triumphs must have convinced them that he was right. He made it appear to the Afghans that his was a national cause ; and those whom he could not otherwise induce, he compelled by conscription.

'Many of them,' Abbās Khān says, 'who had assumed the garb of religious mendicants, on account of their misfortunes, he rallied and enlisted as soldiers ; and some who refused to enlist, and preferred a life of mendicancy, he put to death, and declared he would kill every Afghan who refused to be a soldier. He was very careful of his Afghans in action, that their lives might not be uselessly sacrificed. When the Afghans heard that Sher Khān was eagerly patronising their race, they entered into his service from all directions.'

"He was one of the most humane conquerors," writes Prof. Qanungo. "In spite of his severity, no general was more beloved of his soldiers. His personal magnetism was great, which animated his soldiers and made them cheerfully perform their onerous duties. After a hard day's march the soldiers were not allowed to rest before throwing up redoubts round their encampment. They implicitly submitted to all hardships, not as the slaves of an Oriental despot but as the comrades of an adored commander....Originality and boldness of plan, rapidity of movement, and an eye for strategic situations characterised Sher Shāh's campaigns. He was averse to unnecessary bloodshed and cruelty, and had no passion for fight. He had above all, a heart which soldiers and statesmen often lack. He could feel for the misfortune of his enemy : we are told that tears burst out of his eyes when the Mughal queen with a multitude of ladies came out of the camp and stood suppliant before him (after Humāyun's defeat at Chaunsa)."

In the opinion of the same writer, Sher Shāh was "the greatest administrative and military genius among the Afghans." A careful examination of the administrative system that he established within his dominions and its abiding effects, in an otherwise chaotic age, would go to show that there is little exaggeration in the use of this superlative. Those who plead want of time in the case of Bābur will find in Sher Shāh's constructive achievement a convincing refutation of their apology for Bābur's lack of administrative genius. Abu-l-Faql's observation that he introduced some of the many plans of Alā-ud-din Khaljī of which he had heard 'as they are detailed in the *Tarikh-i-Firūz-Shāhi*', does scant justice to Sher Shāh's political originality. But more than any detail of civil or military organisation which he might have borrowed from earlier kings, the spirit that informed his entire régime forms the basis of his enduring fame. Crooke's estimate in this respect is therefore quite appropriate: "He was the first Musalman ruler," he says, "who studied the good of his people. He had the genius to see that the government must be popularised, that the king must govern for the benefit of his subjects, that the Hindus must be conciliated by a policy of justice and toleration, that the land-revenue must be settled on an equitable basis, that material development of the country must be encouraged... All this and more Akbar strove to do later on... Sher Shāh relaxed the oppressive Muhammadan law code and provided for the administration of justice. That he introduced such extensive reforms in his short reign of five years is a wonderful proof of his executive ability. 'No government, not even the British, has shown so much wisdom as this Pathan,' as Keene says."

The *Tarikh-i-Sher-Shāhi* of Abbās Khān Sarwāni provides us with the best summary of Sher Shāh's administration:—

'When fortune gave into the hands of Sher Shāh the bridle of power, and the kingdom of Hind fell under his dominion,' says the chronicler, 'he made certain laws, both from his own ideas, and by extracting them from the works of the learned, for securing relief from tyranny, and for the repression of crime and villainy; for maintaining the prosperity of his realms, the safety of the highways, and the comfort of merchants and troops. "Crime and violence," he said, prevent the development of prosperity. It behoves kings to be grateful for the favour that the Lord has made His people subject to them, and, therefore, not to disobey the commandments of God."

' Sher Shāh attended to every business concerning the administration of the kingdom and the revenues, whether great or small, in his own person. So he divided both day and night into portions for each separate business and suffered no idleness to find its way to him. "For," said he, "it behoves the great to be always active, and they should not consider, on account of the greatness of their own dignity and loftiness of their own rank, the affairs and business of the kingdom, small or petty, and must place no undue reliance on their ministers.... The corruption of ministers of contemporary princes was the means of my acquiring the worldly kingdom I possess. A king should not have corrupt *vakils* or *wazirs* ; for a receiver of bribes is dependent on the giver of bribes ; and one who is dependent is unfit for the office of *vezir*, for he is an interested personage ; and to an interested person loyalty and truth in the administration of the kingdom are lost."

' Sher Shāh was adorned with the jewel of justice, and he often times remarked : "*Justice is the most excellent of religious rites, and it is approved alike by the kings of infidels and of the faithful.*" When the young shoot of Sher Shāh's prosperity came into bearing, he always ascertained the exact truth regarding the oppressed, and the suitors for justice ; and he never favoured the oppressors, although they might be his near relations, his dear sons, his renowned nobles, or of his own tribe ; and he never showed any delay or lenity in punishing oppressors. He appointed courts of justice in every place.'

[Criminal justice was administered by the *Chief Shiqdar* and revenue disputes settled by the *Chief Munsif*. No historian tells us, says Qanungo, anything about the appointment of the *mir-i-adals* or the *qazis* for trying civil cases requiring the knowledge of Muslim canon-law. In an anecdote of the *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* (MS. p. 204) we find the only allusion to *mir-i-adal* and *qazi*. This was undoubtedly a continuation of an old institution, developed by Sultan Sikander Lodi.]

' He strictly impressed on the *amils* and governors, that if a theft or robbery occurred within their limits, and the perpetrators were not discovered, then they should arrest the *muqaddams* of the surrounding villages, and compel them to make it good ; but if the *muqaddams* produced the offenders, or pointed out their haunts, the thieves and highway robbers themselves were punished with the penalties laid down in the holy law. And if murders should occur, and the murderers were not discovered, the *amils* were enjoined to seize the *muqaddams*, as detailed above, and imprison them and give



them a period within which to declare the murderers. If they produced the murderer, or pointed out where he lived, they were to let the *muqaddam* go, and put the murderer to death. But if the *muqaddams* of a village where the murder had occurred could not do this, they were themselves put to death ; for it has been generally ascertained that theft and highway robberies can only take place by the connivance of these headmen... If a *muqaddam* harbours thieves and robbers unknown to the governor, it is fit he should be punished, or even be put to death, that it may be a warning to others to abstain from similar acts.

*Collection of Revenue* : 'The rules for the collection of revenue from the people and for the prosperity of the kingdom were after this wise : 'There was in every *pargana*, one *amil*, one God-fearing *sigdar*, one treasurer, one *karkun* to write Hindi, and one to write Persian, and he ordered his governors to measure the land every harvest, to collect the revenue according to the measurement, and in proportion to the produce, giving one share to the cultivator, and half a share to the *muqaddam* ; and fixing the assessment with regard to the kind of grain, in order that the *muqaddams* and the *chautharis*, and *amils* should not oppress the cultivators, who are the support of the prosperity of the kingdom. Before his time it was not the custom to measure the land, but there was a *qanungo* for every *pargana*, from whom was ascertained the present, past, and probable future state of the *pargana*.

[Under Sher Shāh, lands were surveyed under an uniform system of mensuration. He ordered the use of the *gaz-Sikandari* (32 digits.) The land was measured by rope,—for which later on Akbar substituted the bamboo,—into *bhigas*. The terms *bhiga* and *jarib* were interchangeable ; one *jarib* or *bhiga* consisted of 3,600 sq. *gaz* (*Ain.*, II, p. 62). The holding of every *rayat* was separately measured and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the expected produce was assessed as the government revenue. As was the custom under previous Sultans, the cultivator was given the choice of payment either in kind or cash, preference being given to the latter. A *kabuliyat* or agreement, containing a short account of the *rayat's* holding, and the amount to be paid by him to Government, was taken by the *amin* from every individual *rayat*, duly signed and attested ; and he gave in return a *patta* or title-deed to the *rayat*, with a record of the State demand. "Sher Shāh regarded the interests of the ruler and the *rayat*, as identical : 'If a little favour is shown to the *rayat*, the ruler benefits by it.' His general instruction to the revenue officers was—'Be lenient at the time of assessment, but show no mercy at the time of collection.' His revenue-system, popularly known as *Todar*

*Mal's bandobast*, obtained in Northern India throughout the Mughal period, and in all its essential features has survived in British India under the name of the *rayatwari-settlement*, admired so enthusiastically by the Anglo-Indian administrators."}]

'In every *sarkar* he appointed a chief (*Siqdar-i-siqdaran*) and a *Chief Munsif* (*Munsif-i-munsifan*), that they might watch over the conduct of both the *amils* and the people ; that the *amils*, should not oppress or injure the people, or embezzle the King's revenue ; and if any quarrel arose among the *amils*, regarding the boundaries of the *parganas*, they were to settle that no confusion might find its way amongst the King's affairs. If the people, from any lawlessness or rebellious spirit, created a disturbance regarding the collection of the revenue, they were so to eradicate and destroy them with punishment and chastisement that their wickedness and rebellion should not spread to others.'

[The duties of the *Chief Siqdar* resembled those of the *Faujdar* under the Mughals, and discharged functions as under Sikander Lodi. Though a military noble, with a police force of 2,000 to 5,000 troops under him, he was essentially a civil officer like a modern magistrate. The word *munsif* means 'doer of justice' ; the *Chief Munsif* seems to have also acted as a circuit-judge for trying civil suits, and redressing the grievances of the peasants and *muqaddams* at the hands of *pargana* officials.]

*Transfer of Officers* : Every year, or second year, he changed his *amils*, and sent new ones, for he said, "I have examined much, and accurately ascertained that there is no such income and advantage in other employments as the government of a district. Therefore, I send my good old experienced loyal servants to take charge of districts, that the salaries, profits, and advantages, may accrue to them in preference to others ; and after two years I change them, and send other servants like to them, that they also may prosper, and that under my rule all my old servants may enjoy these profits and advantages, and that the gate of comfort and ease may be opened to them. As with the civil so with the military, he observed this rule of equi-distribution of profits and of labour. Abbās Khān writes : 'And in every place where it served his interests, he kept garrisons. After a time he used to send for the forces which had enjoyed ease and comfort on their *jagirs*, and to send away in their stead the chiefs who had undergone labour and hardships with the victorious army.'

*Military Organisation* : 'His whole army was beyond all limit

or numbering, and it increased every day. The rule regarding the army for guarding the kingdom from the disturbances of rebels, and to keep down and repress contumacious and rebellious *zamindars*, so that no one should think the kingdom undefended, and therefore attempt to conquer it, was as follows :—

‘ Sher Shāh always kept 150,000 horse, and 25,000 footmen, either armed with match-locks or bows, present with him, and on some expeditions took even more with him. There were also 5,000 elephants in his elephant-sheds. And in every place where it served his interests he kept garrisons ; e.g., in the fort of Gwalior he kept a force to which were attached 1,000 match-lock men. In Bayāna he kept a division, besides a garrison of 500 match-locks ; in Rantambhor another division besides 1,600 match-lock men ; in the fort of Chitor, 3,000 match-lock men ; in the fort of Shadmābad or Māndu was stationed Sujāt Khān with 10,000 horse and 7,000 match-locks. He had his *jagirs* in Hindia and Mālwa. In the fort of Raisin a force was stationed together with 1,000 artillery men ; and in the fort of Chunar, another force also with 1,000 match-lock men ; and in the fort of Rohtas, near Bihar, he kept Ikhtiyār Khān Panni, with 10,000 match-lock men : and Sher Shāh kept treasures without number or reckoning in that fort... (Similarly, at Nagaur, Jodhpur, Ajmer, Lucknow, Kālpi, etc.) The kingdom of Bengal he divided into parts, and made Kāzi Fazilat *Amir* of that whole kingdom.’

Prof. Qanungo has observed that to “ Sultan Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī belongs the credit of organising the Indian army on a new model. He created an army recruited directly by the central government, paid in cash from the State treasury, officered by nobles of the Sultan’s own choice, while corruption was checked by the *dāgh* (branding) system. The armies of the Lodis were of the clannish feudal type, consisting of the quotas of various tribal chiefs enjoying *jagirs* for service. Sher Shāh revived the system of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī and transformed the army into a truly Imperial institution. The soldier obeyed his immediate commanding officer, not as his personal chief, but as the Emperor’s servant. The Emperor combined in himself the functions of the Commander-in-Chief and the Pay-Master-General. ... In order to take away from the military character of the administration, Sher Shāh took care that in normal times of peace, the military should remain in the background, only as the support of the civil authority.”

*Branding of Horses* : ‘ Among the rules which Sher Shāh promulgated, was the branding of horses. And he said he ordered it on

this account, that the rights of the chiefs and the soldiers might be distinct, and that the chiefs might not be able to defraud the soldiers of their rights ; and that every one should maintain soldiers according to his rank (*mansab*) and not vary his numbers.

"For," said he, "in the time of Sultan Ibrāhim, and afterwards, I observed that many base nobles were guilty of fraud and falsehood, who at the time their monthly salary was assigned to them, had a number of soldiers ; but when they had got possession of their *jagirs*, they dismissed the greater number of their men without payment, and only kept a few men for indispensable duties, and did not even pay them in full. Nor did they regard the injury to their master's interests, of the ingratitude of their own conduct ; and when their lord ordered a review or assembly of their forces, they brought strange men and horses, and mustered them, but the money they put into their own treasuries. In time of war they would be defeated from paucity of numbers ; but they kept the money, and when their master's affairs became critical and disordered, they, equipping themselves with this very money, took service elsewhere ; so, from the ruin of their master's fortunes, they suffered no loss. When I had the good fortune to gain power, I was on my guard against the deceit and fraud of both soldiers and chiefs, and ordered the horses to be branded, in order to block up the road against these tricks and frauds, so that the chief could not entertain strangers to fill up their ranks."

'Sher Shāh's custom was this that he would not pay their salary unless the horses were branded, and he carried it to such an extent that he would not give anything to the sweepers and women servants about the palace without a brand, and they wrote out descriptive rolls of the men and horses and brought them before him, and he himself compared the rolls when he fixed the monthly salaries and then he had the horses branded in his presence.

*Roads and Sarais* : 'For the convenience of poor travellers on every road at a distance of two *kos*, he made a *sarai* : and one road with *sarais* he made from the fort he built in the Punjab to the city of Sonārgaon, which is situated in the kingdom of Bengal, on the shore of the ocean. Another road he made from the city of Agra to Jodhpur and Chitor, and one road with *sarais* from the city of Lahore to Multan. Altogether he built 1,700 *sarais* on various roads ; and in every *sarai* he built separate lodging, both for Hindus and for Musalmans, and at the gate of every *sarai* he placed vessels full of water, that any one might drink ; and in every *sarai* he settled Brāhmins for the entertainment of Hindus, to provide hot and cold water, and beds and food, and grain for all their horses ; and it was a rule

in these *sarais*, that whoever entered them received provisions suitable to his rank, and food and litter for his cattle from Government.

'Villages were established all round the *sarais*. In the middle of every *sarai* was a well and a *masjid* of burnt brick ; and he placed an *imām* and a *muazzin* in every *masjid*, together with a custodian (*shahna*), and several watchmen ; and all these were maintained from the land near the *sarai*. On both sides of the highway Sher Shāh planted fruit-bearing trees, such as also gave much shade, that in the hot wind travellers might go along under the trees ; and if they should stop by the way, might rest and take repose. If they put up at a *sarai*, they bound their horses under the trees.

*Spies and Informers* : 'At every *sarai* were placed two horses for the news reporters. So there were 3,400 horses, in all the *sarais* together, always ready to bring intelligence every day from every quarter. For the enforcement of the regulations which he had established for the protection of the people, Sher Shāh sent trusted spies with every force of his nobles, in order that, inquiring and secretly ascertaining all circumstances relating to the nobles, their soldiers, and the people, they might relate them to him ; for the courtiers and ministers, for purposes of their own, do not report to the King the whole state of the kingdom, lest any disorder or deficiency which may have found its way into the courts of justice should be corrected.

*Merchants and Travellers* : 'In days of Sher Shāh and of Islām Shāh, the *muqaddams* used to protect the limits of their own villages lest any thief or robber or enemy might injure a traveller, and so be the means of his destruction and death. And he directed his governors and *amils* to compel the people to treat merchants and travellers well in every way, and not to injure at all ; and if a merchant should die by the way, not to stretch out the hand of oppression and violence on his goods as if they were unowned ; for Sheikh Nizāmi (may God be merciful to him !) has said : "If a merchant should die in your country, it is perfidy to lay hands on his property." Throughout his whole kingdom Sher Shāh levied customs on merchandise only in two places, *viz.*, when it came from Bengal, customs were levied at Gharri (Sikhri-gali) ; and when it came from the direction of Kurāsan, the customs were levied on the borders of the kingdom ; and a second duty was levied at the place of sale. No one dared to levy other customs, either on the road or on the ferries, in town or village. Sher Shāh, moreover, forbade his officials to purchase anything in the *bazars* except at the usual *bazar* rates and prices.

*Protection of Cultivators* : 'One of the regulations Sher Shāh made was this : That his victorious standards should cause no injury to the cultivation of the people and when he marched he personally examined into the state of the cultivation, and stationed horsemen round to prevent people from trespassing on anyone's field. If he saw any man injuring a field, he would cut off his ears with his own hands, and hanging the corn (which he had plucked off) round his neck, would have him to be paraded through the camp. And if from the narrowness of the road, any cultivation was unavoidably destroyed, he would send *amirs*, with a surveyor, to measure the cultivation so destroyed, and give compensation in money to the cultivators. If he entered an enemy's country, he did not enslave or plunder the peasantry of that country, nor destroy their cultivation. "For," said he, "The cultivators are blameless, they submit to those in power, and if I oppress them they will abandon their villages, and the country will be ruined and deserted, and it will be a long time before it again becomes prosperous."

*Charities* : 'His kitchen was very extensive, for several thousand horsemen and private followers fed there ; and there was a general order, that if any soldier or religious personage, or any cultivator, should be in need of food, he should feed at the King's kitchen, and should not be allowed to famish. The daily cost of these meals was 500 gold pieces (*ashrafis*). Sher Shāh often said : "It is incumbent upon kings to give grants to *imāms* ; for the prosperity and populousness of the cities of Hind are dependent on the *imāms* and holy men ; and the teachers and travellers, and the necessitous, who cannot come to the King, will praise him, being supported by those who have grants ; and the convenience of travellers and the poor is thereby secured, as well as the extension of learning, of skill and religion, for whoever wishes that God Almighty should make him great, should feed the *ulema* and pious persons, that he may obtain honour in this world and felicity in the next."

*Buildings* : "Sher Shāh left the indelible impress of his personality, not only upon the useful but also on the ornamental side of the imperial edifice," writes Prof. Qanungo. "His noble tomb at Sāsarām still brings home to the mind of the beholder the grandeur of the Empire,—severe yet graceful ; externally Muslim, but Hindu inside." V. A. Smith observed : "The mausoleum of Sher Shāh at Sāsarām, built on a lofty plinth, in the midst of a lake, is one of the

best designed and most beautiful buildings in India unequalled among the earlier buildings in the northern provinces for grandeur and dignity. Cunningham was half inclined to prefer it even to the Tāj. The dome, although not equal in size to the Gol Gumbaz of Bijapur, is 13 ft. wider than that of the Agra monument. Externally the architecture is wholly Muhammadan, but Hindu corbelling and horizontal architraves are used in all the inner door-ways, as at Jaunpur. The style may be described as intermediate between the austerity of the Tughlak buildings and the feminine grace of Shāh Jahān's masterpiece." Havell saw in it the personality and character of Sher Shāh : "Though forbidden by his creed to make himself a graven image, the Musalman monarch took so much interest in the planning of his last resting place, that unconsciously he gave it the impress of his own character, and the builders formed it after his own image."

"If my life lasts long enough," said Sher Shāh, "I will build a fort in every *sarkar*, on a suitable spot, which may in times of trouble become a refuge for the oppressed and a check to the contumacious ; and I am making all the earthenwork *sarais* of brick that they also may serve for the protection and safety of the highway." So he built the fort of Rohtas, on the road to Khurāsan, to hold in check Kashmir and the country of the Gakkars, about 60 *kos* from Lahore, and fortified and strengthened it exceedingly. There was never seen a place so fortified, and immense sums were expended upon the work. He called that fort *Little Rohtas*.

'The former capital city of Delhi was at a distance from the Jumna, and Sher Shāh destroyed and rebuilt it, by the bank of the Jumna, and ordered two forts to be built in that city, with the strength of a mountain, and loftier in height ; the smaller fort for the governor's residence ; the other, the wall round the entire city, to protect it ; and in the governor's fort he built a *jāma masjid* of stone, in the ornamenting of which much gold, *lapis lazuli* and other precious articles were expended. But the fortifications round the city were not completed when Sher Shāh died. He destroyed also the old city of Kanauj, the former capital of the kings of India, and built a fort of burnt brick there ; and on the spot where he had gained his victory, he built a city, and called it *Sher Sūr*. I can find no satisfactory reason for the destruction of the old city, and the act was very unpopular,' writes Abbās Sarwāni.

'From the day that Sher Shāh was established on the throne,

no man dared to breathe in opposition to him : nor did any one raise the standard of contumacy or rebellion against him ; nor was any heart-tormenting thorn produced in the garden of his kingdom, nor was there any of his nobles or soldiery, or a thief or a robber, who dared to direct the eye of dishonesty to the property of another ; nor did any theft or robbery even occur within his dominions. Travelers and wayfarers during the time of Sher Shāh's reign were relieved from the trouble of keeping watch ; nor did they fear to halt even in the midst of a desert : and the *zamindars* for fear lest any mischief should occur to the travellers, and that they should suffer, or be arrested on account of it, kept watch over them. And in the time of Sher Shāh's rule, a decrepit old woman might place a basketful of gold ornaments on her head and go on a journey, and no thief or robber would come near her, for fear of the punishment which Sher Shāh inflicted. Such a shadow spread over the world, that a decrepit person feared not a Rustam. During his time all quarrelling, disputing, fighting and turmoil, which is the nature of the Afghans, was altogether quieted and put a stop to, throughout the countries of Roh and of Hindustan. Sher Shāh, in his wisdom and experience, was a second Haider. In a very short period, he gained the dominion of the country, and provided for the safety of the highways, the administration of the Government, and the happiness of the soldiery and people. God is a discerner of righteousness !'

So closes Abbās Khān Sarwāni's account of Sher Shāh. We might add a few modern estimates to his.

*Some Modern Estimates of Sher Shāh :*

*E. B. Havell :* " Sher Shah showed brilliant capacity as an organiser, both in military and civil affairs. By dint of indefatigable industry and personal attention to the smallest details of administration, he restored law and order throughout Hindustan in the short space of five years. And no doubt the long-suffering, law-abiding rayat was grateful to the iron-handed Afghan for an interval of comparative peace, and for protection against indiscriminate plunder, though he might sometimes sigh for the golden days when even Sudras were Aryan free-men, and the laws of the village Assemblies were respected even by the King of kings and Supreme Lord of the Five Indies."

*William Erskine :* " He rose to the throne by his own talents,



and showed himself worthy of the high elevation which he attained. In intelligence, in sound sense and experience, in his civil and financial arrangements, and in military skill, he is acknowledged to have been by far the most eminent of his nation, who ever ruled in India. . . . Sher Shah had more of the spirit of the legislator and guardian of his people than any prince before Akbar."

*H. G. Keene* : "His brief career was devoted to the establishment of the unity which he had long ago perceived to be the great need of his country. Though a devout Muslim, he never oppressed his Hindu subjects. His progresses were the cause of good to his people instead of being—as is too often the case in India—the occasions of devastation. . . . It is a welcome task to take note of such things as a break in the long annals of rapine and slaughter, and we can do so without hesitation ; for the acts of Sher Shah are attested by his enemies, writing when he was dead, and when his dynasty had passed away for ever."

*V. A. Smith* : "Sher Shah was something more than the capable leader of a horde of fierce Afghans. He had a nice taste in architecture, manifested especially in the noble mausoleum at Sasseram (Sahasram) in Bihar which he prepared for himself. . . . He also displayed an aptitude for civil government and instituted reforms, which were based to some extent on the institutions of Alauddin Khilji and were developed by Akbar. . . . He reformed the coinage, issuing an abundance of silver money, excellent in both fineness and execution. That is a good record for a stormy reign of five years. If Sher Shah had been spared he would have established his dynasty, and the 'Great Mughals' would not have appeared on the stage of history."

*Kalikacharan Qanungo* : "The accession of Sher Shah marked the beginning of that era of liberal Islam which lasted till the reaction of Aurangzeb's reign. . . . Sher Shah may justly dispute with Akbar the claim of being the first who attempted to build up an Indian nation. . . . The work of Sher Shah's administrative genius did not perish with his dynasty, but lasted throughout the Mughal period with some inevitable changes due to the greater expansion of the empire. It forms the substratum of our present administrative system. The modern magistrate and collector of British India is the official successor of the *Shiqdar-i-shiqdaran* of Sher Shah, and the *tahsildar* that of the *amil* or *amin*. . . . The revenue and currency system which prevailed in India with very little modification down to the middle

of the XIX century were not the achievements of Akbar but of Sher Shah."

*Sher Shāh's Coinage* : "Sher Shah's reign constituted an important test point in the annals of Indian coinage, not only in its specific mint reforms, but also as correcting the progressive deteriorations of the previous kings, and as introducing these many reforms which the succeeding Mughals claimed as their own." (Thomas, *Chronicles of the Pathan Kings*, p. 403.)

"Sher Shah is entitled to the honour of establishing the reformed system of currency which lasted throughout the Mughal period, was maintained by the East India Company down to 1835, and is the basis of the existing British currency. He finally abolished the inconvenient billon coinage of mixed metal, and struck well-executed pieces in gold, silver, and copper, to a fixed standard of both weight and fineness. His silver rupees, which weigh 180 grains, and contain 175 grains of pure silver, being thus practically equal in value to the modern rupee, often have the king's name in Nāgari characters in addition to the usual Arabic inscriptions."—(V. A. Smith, *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, ii, pp. 145-6.)

"His coins also illustrate the rapidity with which he conquered the countries settled under his rule. The land survey, construction of roads, and establishment of mint towns seem to follow almost in the wake of his conquering armies."—(Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 383.)

#### *Sher Shāh's Successors* :

The brief history of Sher Shāh's successors has little interest beyond revealing in detail the nature of the situation that enabled Humāyun to recover his lost patrimony. But, the Afghan episode has a value for us as containing in a nut-shell, as it were, the same lesson that is more elaborately illustrated in the history of the Mughal Empire. As Keene has said, "It is the misfortune of absolute monarchy that the best rulers can never ensure a worthy successor." Sher Shāh's sovereignty was assumed by persons who were labouring under the usual trials of princes born for power which they had done nothing to acquire. Sher Shāh himself, as we have seen, more than once attributed the loss of Afghan dominion to their dissensions. When the strong hand restraining them was removed, the old contentiousness of the Afghan nobility sprang up again. The whole period of Salim's (Sher Shāh's son) reign was consumed in intrigues and fruit-

less quarrels : and on his death in November 1554, his son was murdered and a scene of confusion ensued. "The native Muslims fell into such a state of quarrelsome imbecility that the chief command fell into the hands of a Hindu chandler named Hemu."

*Salim Shāh Sūr* : Abdulla, author of *Tarikh-i-Dāudi*, writes :— 'It is related in the *Akbar Shāhi*, that when Sher Shāh rendered up his life to the angel of death in Kālinjar, . . . the nobles perceived that Adil Khān (Sher Shāh's eldest son) would be unable to arrive with speed (from Rantambhor), and as the State required a head, they despatched a person to summon Jalāl Khān who was nearer (in the town of Rewan, in the province of Bhātā). He reached Kālinjar in five days, and by the assistance of Isā Hajjab and other grandees was raised to the throne near the fort of Kālinjar, on the 15th of the month Rabiul awwal 952 A.H. (25 May 1545 A.D.). He assumed the title of Islām Shāh.

'After ascending the throne,' continues Abdulla, 'and inquiring concerning the ordinances of Sher Shāh, he left some as they were, and changed others to suit his own ideas.' He was an improver, like his father, observes Elphinstone, "but rather in public works than in laws." Other writers look upon his regulations as "silly and nonsensical, devised chiefly with the object of reversing his father's policy, and establishing a name for himself as a legislator. Islām Shāh was desirous of showing the world that he also had 'his own thunder'." But a statement of these reforms and enactments will speak for itself. Badāuni, whose account is given below, says, 'These rules were in force till the end of the reign of Salim Shāh, and the compiler of this history (*Tarikh-i-Badāuni*) witnessed the scene above described, when he was of tender age, that is, in the year 955 A.H., when he accompanied his maternal grandfather (may God extend His grace to him!) to the camp of Farid Taran, commander of 5,000 horse which was then pitched in the district of Bajwāra, a dependency of Bayāna.'

'Salim Shāh in the beginning of his reign issued orders that as the *sarais* of Sher Shāh were two miles distant from one another, one of similar form should be built between them for the convenience of the public; and that a mosque and a reservoir should be attached to them, and that vessels of water and of victuals, cooked and uncooked, should be always kept in readiness for the entertainment of Hindu as well as Muhammadan travellers. In one of his orders he directed that all the *madad-ma'sh* and *aima* tenures in Hindustan which Sher Shāh had granted, and all the *sarais* which he had

built and the gardens he had laid out, should not be alienated, and that no change should be made in their limits. He took away from the nobles all the dancing-girls maintained in their courts, according to the common practice of India. He also took from them all their elephants, and let none of them retain more than a sorry female, adopted only for carrying baggage. It was enacted that red tents should be in the exclusive use of the sovereign. He resumed and placed under immediate management of the State, the lands enjoyed by the troops, and established pecuniary payments in lieu, according to the rates fixed by Sher Shāh. Circular orders were issued through the proper channels to every district, touching on matters religious, political, and fiscal, in all their most minute bearings, and containing rules and regulations, which concerned not only the army, but cultivators, merchants, and persons of other professions, and which were to serve as guides to the officials of the State, *whether they were in accordance with the Muhammadan law or not*; a measure which obviated the necessity of referring any of these matters to *Kāzis* and *Muftis*.

*Character of the Administration* : The real character of Salim Shāh's administration is perhaps best represented by the author of the *Tarikh-i-Dāudi* : 'Islām Shāh', writes Abdulla, 'resembled his father in his pomp and splendour, and in his desire for dominion and conquest. On the day of his accession to the throne, he ordered two months' pay to be distributed in ready money to the army : one month of this he gave them as a present ; the other as subsistence money. Moreover, he resumed all the *jagirs* in the provinces of his government, and allowed their holders a stipend in money from his treasury instead. To those who had received stipends during the reign of Sher Shāh he gave lands and *parganas*. During the time of Sher Shāh, a place had always been established in the royal camp for the distribution of alms to the poor. Instead of this, Islām Shāh directed that arrangements for the giving of alms should be made at each of the *sarais*, and that indigent travellers should be supplied with whatever they needed, and that mendicants should receive a daily pittance, in order that they might be contented and at peace. He had, whilst Prince, 6,000 horsemen with him, and he now promoted all of them : He made privates officers, and officers nobles. These regulations of Islām Shāh caused those of Sher Shāh to fall into disuse. Many of Sher Shāh's principal nobles were disgusted at what they regarded as acts tending to dishonour them, and became ill-disposed towards Islām Shāh. He, in his turn, was likewise suspicious of these grandees, and thus *the relations which existed between the great chiefs and the King were changed in their nature.*'

*Revolts and Disturbances* : 'Islām Shāh was a monarch of treacherous and vindictive disposition. When he secured power in his own hands, he dissimulated loyalty to his elder brother, Adil Khān, who had been nominated Sher Shāh's heir-apparent. But Adil Khān was a man who loved ease and comfort. So he preferred to retire to the *jagir* of Bayāna, which was assigned to him. Yet Islām Shāh made an attempt to secure his person. 'The latter however,' says Ferishta, 'having timely information of the design, fled to Mewāt, where Khāwas Khān then resided, and acquainted that chief, with tears in his eyes, of his brother's baseness. Khāwas Khān, whose honour was concerned, roused with indignation, seized Ghāzi Mahally (Islām Shāh's agent), and went into open rebellion. Khāwas Khān's character was so high, that by writing letters to the nobles of the court, he gained many partisans, and accompanied by the prince Adil Khān, he marched towards Agra . . . (But) although his troops behaved with great bravery, he was overthrown by Salim Shāh. After the action, the prince Adil Khān fled, in the first instance, to Patna; but, soon after disappearing, was never again heard of; the insurgent chiefs were obliged to retreat among the Kumaon hills, but only for a time.

'After these events, Islām Shāh became mistrustful of all his nobles, and took measures to overthrow them. He put some of them in prison and deprived others of all their possessions. He also placed his own nephew, Mahmūd Khān, the son of Adil Khān, under surveillance, and ruined, first Kutb Khān Sūr, then Barmazid Sūr, Jalāl Khān Sūr, and Zain Khān Niazi. He slew Jalāl Khān Sūr, as well as his brother, by binding them to the feet of an elephant, after which he caused the aforesaid nobles to be placed on the elephant, and paraded through the camp. The hearts of the nobles of Sher Shāh were filled with terror and consternation. After this he put many others to death, amongst whom was Khāwas Khān, who bore the title of Masnad Ali, who was impaled on some frivolous pretext. He continued for a long time to distress the whole of his subjects, and to make God's servants miserable; but towards the end of his reign he behaved towards the people with liberality and generosity.'

What has been said should suffice to illustrate the character of Salim Shāh's reign. There were other rebellions and disturbances, principally of the Niazis under Āzam Humāyun, and the Gakkars under Sultan Adam Gakkar (who had delivered Kāmran into the hands of Humāyun). To the last, Salim Shāh was engaged in reducing these disorders. In the course of these troubled years, more than one attempt was made on his life. 'Certain nobles desired to place Mubārīz Khān, (who possessed the title of Adali) on the throne.' As the rebellious Niazis declared : "*No one obtains a kingdom by heritance; it belongs to whoever can gain it by sword.*" Islām Shāh was informed of the treason of these people, and immediately endeavoured to assemble them in one place, and there punish them. The chiefs

being warned of his intention, met together, and entered into an agreement not to present themselves at the *darbār* all at once, but to go one by one. Islām Shāh was day and night thinking and planning how he might best put them to death. But the decrees of Providence do not change to suit human wishes and counsels, and he was suddenly taken ill and confined to bed in the fort of Gwalior (which had been long his favourite residence) . . . He summoned (his wife) Bibi Bai, and said, "I have the reins still in my hands, and have as yet lost nothing. If you desire your son to reign after me, tell me to do it, and I will cause your brother Mubārīz Khān to be removed." On this Bībī Bai began to weep. Islām Shāh said, "You know best !"

And then suddenly as he was speaking, he gave up the ghost in the twinkling of an eye, and departed to the next world in the year 961 A.H. (November 1554).

Many of the troops who were not aware of the King's illness, on receiving the unexpected intelligence of his decease, were much perturbed and distressed, as it threw their affairs into confusion. His body was taken from Gwalior, and deposited at Sāsarām, near that of his father.

*Fīrūz Shāh Sūr* : Ferishta narrates the sequel thus :—Salim Shāh 'was succeeded by his son, the Prince Fīrūz, then twelve years of age, who was placed on the throne by the chiefs of the tribe of Sūr at Gwalior. He had not reigned three days, when Mubārīz Khān, the son of Nizām Khān Sūr (Sher Shāh's brother) at once the nephew of the late Sher Shāh, and brother-in-law of Salim Shāh, assassinated the young Prince, and ascending the throne, assumed the title of Mahmūd Shāh Adil . . . On the third day after the death of Salim Shāh, Mubārīz Khān, having entered the female apartments, slew with his own hand the unhappy Prince, whom he dragged from the arms of his mother, Bībī Bai, his own sister.' When her husband had always insisted upon getting rid of her brother, Mubārīz Khān being too dangerous for the Prince, she had always replied, "My brother is too fond of dissipation and pleasure to encumber himself with the load of anxiety which belongs to a King." But the decrees of Providence do not change to suit human wishes and counsels !'

### *Three Kings :*

1. *Mahmūd Shāh Adali* : Mubārīz, after the murder of his nephew, ascended the throne of Sher Shāh and assumed the title of

Mahmūd Shāh Adil. But his character soon changed his self-styled epithet of *Adil* (the just), into first, *Adali* (the foolish), and then into *Andhali* (blind). Elphinstone remarks, "His character was not such as to efface the memory of his crime; he was grossly ignorant, fond of coarse debauchery and low society, and as despicable from his incapacity as he was odious for his vices." One illustration from Ferishta may be here cited:—"Having often heard much in praise of the munificence of former kings, particularly of Mahomed Tughlak, and mistaking prodigality for liberality, he opened the treasury, and lavished riches on all ranks without distinction. As he rode out he discharged amongst the multitude golden-headed arrows, which sold for ten or twelve rupees each. This wanton extravagance soon left him without any of the treasure of his predecessors.' When he had nothing of his own to give, he resumed the governments and *jagirs* of his nobles, and bestowed them on his favourites 'among whom, one Hernu, a Hindu shop-keeper, whom his predecessor, Salim Shāh, had made superintendent of the markets, was entrusted with the whole administration of affairs. The King in the meantime, heedless of what passed, spent his time in excess among the inmates of his harem. This naturally created him enemies among the Afghan chiefs, who, having conspired against his life, revolted from his authority. The King became daily more and more despicable in the eyes of his subjects, while all regularity in the Government ceased.'

2. *Ibrāhim Khān Sūr* : Under these chaotic circumstances, the more ambitious among the nobles and princes tried to feather each his own nest. Tāj Khān Kirāni, for instance, openly declared, "that affairs had taken such an extraordinary turn at Court, that he was determined to push his own fortune." His rebellion obliged the King to take the field in person, and go in his pursuit towards Chunar. Taking this opportunity, Ibrāhim Khān, the King's cousin and brother-in-law, 'raised a considerable army, and getting possession of the city of Delhi, ascended the throne, and assumed the ensigns of royalty. From thence he marched to Agra, and reduced the circumjacent provinces. . . Mahmūd Shāh Adali, finding himself betrayed, fled to Chunar, and contented himself with the government of the eastern provinces, while Ibrāhim Khān retained possession of the western territory.'

3. *Sikander Shāh Sūr* : Ibrāhim Khān no sooner ascended the throne of Delhi than another competitor arose in the Punjab in the

person of the Prince Ahmad Khān, another nephew of Sher Shāh, whose sister was married to Mahmūd Shāh Adali. Ahmad Khān, having procured the aid of Haibat Khān and other chiefs, who had been created nobles by the late Salim Shāh, assumed the title of Sikander Shāh, and marching with 10 or 12 thousand horse towards Agra, encamped at Karra, within twenty miles of that city. Ibrāhim Khān opposed him with 70,000 horse, but nevertheless was defeated. He then, abandoning his capital, retreated to Sāmbhal, while Sikander Khān took possession both of Delhi and Agra. He had not long enjoyed his good fortune, however, when Humāyun advanced into the Punjab to recover his dominion, with what consequence we have already witnessed. After his defeat at Sirhind he fled to the Siwālik mountains, from whence he was expelled, and sought refuge in Bengal, where he assumed the reins of government, and shortly after died.

*End of the Sūr Dynasty :*

A last flicker of hope had been roused among the Afghans, when Sikander, having ascended the throne at Agra, held a magnificent festival, and calling together all his chiefs, spoke to this effect :—

“I esteem myself as one of you : having thus far acted for the commonweal, I claim no superiority. Bahlol raised the tribe of Lodi to glory and reputation ; Sher Shāh rendered the tribe of Sūr illustrious ; and now Humāyun the Mughal, heir to his father's conquests, is watching an opportunity to destroy us all, and re-establish his government. If, therefore, you are sincere, and will set aside private faction and animosities, we may still retain our kingdom ; but if you think me incapable of rule, let an abler head and a stronger arm be elected from among you, that I also may swear allegiance to him : I promise most faithfully to support him, and will endeavour to maintain the kingdom in the hands of the Afghans who have retained it by their valour for so many years.” The Afghan chiefs, after this appeal, answered with one accord : “We unanimously acknowledge you, the nephew of our Emperor Sher Shāh, our lawful sovereign.” Calling then for the *koran*, all swore both to observe allegiance to Sikander, and to maintain unanimity among themselves.’

But, in a few days, Ferishta tells us, ‘the chiefs began to dispute about governments, honours, and places, and the flames of discord were rekindled, and blazed fiercer than ever, so that every one reproached his neighbour with the perfidy of which each was equally guilty.’

The other members of the Sūr family did not fare better than



Sikander. When he was fighting against the Mughals, the other Sûrs, instead of joining hands with him to repel their common enemy, were fighting among themselves. Ibrâhim Khân marched to Kâlpi, while at the same time Mahmûd Shâh Adali detached his *vezir* Hemu, with an army well appointed in cavalry, elephants, and artillery, from Chunar, with a view to recover the western Empire. Hemu attacked Ibrâhim Shâh at Kâlpi, and having defeated him, he was compelled to fly to his father (Ghâzî Khân) at Bayâna, pursued by Hemu who besieged him in that city for three months. Meanwhile, the ruler of Bengal—also a Sûr—led his army against Adali and obliged Hemu to return hastily. Emboldened by this Ibrâhim pursued him to Agra ; but being again defeated once more retired to Bayâna. After some adventures in Bundelkhand, which had become independent under Baz Bahâdur, he fled to Orissa, where he suffered an ignominious death during the reign of Akbar. Mahomed Shâh Sûr of Bengal took refuge in Bundelkhand, but being pursued by Hemu was soon slain. 'Mahmûd Shâh Adali, after this victory, instead of proceeding to Agra, returned to Chunar, to assemble more troops in order to carry on the war against Humâyûn ; but he was soon after informed of that monarch's death, which induced him to detach Hemu, with 50,000 horse, and 500 elephants towards Agra, not daring to leave Chunar himself, on account of the faction which prevailed among his countrymen the Afghans.' The rest of the story belongs naturally to the reign of Akbar. After the defeat and death of Hemu, Mahmûd Shâh's fortunes declined rapidly. Khizr Khân, the next ruler of Bengal, avenged himself for his father's death, by wresting a great part of the eastern provinces out of the hands of Adali, whom he eventually defeated and slew.

This sudden and sharp denouement of the promising and glorious epoch, opened by the dramatic successes of Sher Shâh, appears to have been equally marked by a sad and devastating famine. Badâuni gives the following description of the plight of the people who had already suffered enough from the chaotic conditions incidental to constant warfare :—

'At this time a dreadful famine raged in the eastern provinces, especially in Agra, Bayâna, and Delhi, so that one *seer* of grain (*juwari*) rose to 2½ *tanâs*, and even at that price could not be obtained. Many of the faithful closed their doors, and died by tens and twenties, and even in greater numbers, and found neither coffin nor grave. Hindus perished in the same numbers. The common people fed upon the seeds of the thorny

*acacia*, upon dry herbage of the forest, and on the hides of the cattle which the wealthy slaughtered and sold. After a few days, swellings rose on their hands and feet, so that they died, and the date is represented by the words *khasm-i-izad* : "wrath of God." The author with his own eyes witnessed the fact that men ate their own kind, and the appearance of the famished sufferers was so hideous that one could scarcely look upon them. What with scarcity of rain, the famine and the desolation, and what with uninterrupted warfare for two years, the whole country was a desert, and no husbandmen remained to till the ground. Insurgents also plundered the cities.'

## SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

- 1541 Hindāl forsakes Humāyun and captures Kandahār. Kāmran besieges it for six months. Khizr Khān, governor of Bengal, deposed by Sher Shāh ; reorganisation of the province.
- 1542 Sher Shāh divides his Empire into 116,000 fiscal units, each governed by five officials. Francis Xavier, first Jesuit missionary, lands at Goa. Birth of Akbar at Amarkot. Sadāshiva Rāya nominally succeeds Achyuta Rāya at Vijayanagara ; Rāma Rāya and his brothers in power.
- 1543 Sher Shāh captures Rāisin by strategy. Humāyun goes to Persia, via Kandahār, leaving Prince Akbar in the charge of Askari. Golkonda and Vijayanagara join in alliance against Bijapur.
- 1544 Humāyun received by Shāh Tahmāsp Safavi ; becomes Shiah and obtains help to re-conquer Hindustan. Sher Shāh conquers Chitor, Nagaur and Ajmer.
- 1545 Humāyun takes Khandahār ; Askari and Hindāl join him ; Kāmran flies to Sind. Sher Shāh's death at Kālinjar. Accession of Islām Shāh at Delhi. Muhammad Khān Sūr assumes royalty in Bihar and Bengal.
- 1546 Ports of Gujarat harried by the Portuguese. Death of Martin Luther.
- 1547 Triple Alliance between Vijayanagara, Ahmednagar, and the Portuguese against Bijapur. Kāmran's flight from Kabul and defeat at Badakhshān.
- 1548 Sheikh Alai founder of the Madhī sect, martyred at Agra.
- 1549 Humāyun's failure in Balkh.
- 1550 Humāyun conquers Kabul from Kāmran. Accession of Ibrāhim Kutb Shāh at Golkonda.
- 1551 Birth of Abu-l Faḍl. Death of Hindāl ; Akbar's marriage with Hindāl's daughter.
- 1552 Civil war in Kashmir. Death of Guru Angad and accession of Guru Amardās.
- 1553 Death of Francis Xavier at Goa (Canonised 1622), Kāmran blinded and sent to Mecca (d. 1557).

A.D.

- 1554 Accession of Muhammad Shāh Adil at Delhi. Great earth-quake in Kashmir. Rebellions of the nobles against M. Shāh Adil.
- 1555 Ibrāhim Khān and Sikander Shāh Sūr; former defeated by Humāyun at Sirhind. Mālwa independent under Baz Bahādur.
- 1556 Restoration and death of Humāyun; defeat of Hemu at the Second battle of Pānipat; accession of Akbar. Kabul under Akbar's half-brother Mirza Hākim. Death of Ignatius Loyola.





*From the collection of the  
Victoria and Albert Museum,  
South Kensington.*

**Akbar and Two Mansabdars**

## CHAPTER XII

### RESTORATION OF THE MUGHALS

#### *Akbar's Accession :*

We have already noted the following statement by Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad regarding the birth of Akbar :—

‘Fortune now for a time changed its treatment of the Emperor (Humāyun), by giving him a son, and impressing an imperishable mark upon the page of time. The child was born on the 5th Rajab 949 (15 October 1542). Tārī Beg Khān conveyed this intelligence to the Emperor in the neighbourhood of Amarkot, and the Emperor under spiritual guidance, gave to the child the name of Jalāl-ud-dīn Muhammad Akbar.’

Humāyun, who was a pious man, when he heard of the birth of his son, appears (on the testimony of Jauhār, his personal attendant) to have broken a pod of musk (the only precious thing he could get in his exile in the desert) on a china plate, and distributed it among all the principal persons, saying : “This is all the present I can afford to make you on the birth of my son, whose fame will, I trust, be one day expanded all over the world, as the perfume of the musk now fills this apartment.” Prince Akbar was left behind in Kandahār, when Humāyun left for Persia in quest of fortune, and he was picked up by his uncle Askari, and brought up for about a year by Sultan Begam ‘who treated him with great tenderness.’ In the course of Humāyun’s fight with Kāmrān, the little Prince was threatened to be exposed to the fire of the guns on the battlements of the Kabul fort. After the death of his uncle Hindāl, Razia Sultana, Hindāl’s daughter, was given in marriage to him, and Akbar was put in charge of Hindāl’s command and the government of Ghazni. Akbar then followed his father in his attempted reconquest of Hindustan, in which the great victory at Sirhind was ascribed to his presence in their midst.

After the victory at Sirhind, Sultan Sikander Sūr fled to the Siwālik mountains. Mir Abdul Ma’ali who had been sent in pursuit of him, having failed, Sikander ‘daily grew stronger. This came to the knowledge of the Emperor, who immediately sent Bairām Khān

in attendance upon Prince Akbar as his *atālik* or governor, to put an end to Sikander's operations.' When Akbar was engaged in these operations, occurred the sudden illness and death of Humāyun. 'Sheikh Juli was sent to the Punjab to summon Prince Akbar. . . . He obtained an interview with the Prince at Kalanaur. He communicated the fact of the King's illness, and intelligence of Humāyun's death soon after arrived. After due observance of the rites of mourning, the nobles who were in the suite of the Prince, under the leading of Bairām Khān, acknowledged the succession of the Prince, and so, on the 2nd Rabi'-us-sani, he ascended the throne of Empire at Kalanaur' (14 February 1556) with all due state and ceremony, and letters of grace and favour were sent to all parts of Hindustan.' The proclamation of his succession had been made at Delhi three days earlier, on 11 February; and three days after the enthronement at Kalanaur a 'coronation *darbār*' was held, of which Ahmad Yadgar gives the following description :—

'Bairām Khān gave a great entertainment, and raised a large audience-tent, adorned with embroidered satin, like the flowerbeds of a garden in the early Spring, or Paradise itself. He spread carpets of various colours, and on them he placed a golden throne, and caused Prince Akbar Mirza to sit on it; after which the *darbār* was opened to the public. The nobles of the Chaghatai tribe were made joyful by the gift of expensive dresses of honour, and regal presents, and promises of future favour were likewise made to them. Bairām Khān said, "This is the commencement of His Majesty's reign."'

### *The Political Situation :*

"When he went through the ceremony at Kalanaur," says Smith, "he could not be said to possess any Kingdom. The small army under the command of Bairām Khān merely had a precarious hold by force on certain districts of the Punjab; and that army itself was not to be trusted implicitly. Before Akbar could become Pādshāh in reality as well as in name he had to prove himself better than the rival claimants to the throne, and at least to win back his father's lost dominions." Among the successors of Sher Shāh, Sikander Sūr was yet to be subdued; Mahmūd Shāh Adali was still alive, and his Hindu general, Hemu, had become a power to reckon with even more than his nominal master. Bengal had remained independent for more than two centuries, mostly under the Afghans. The Rajput clans of Rājasthān, having recovered from the defeat they had sustain-

ed at the hands of Bābur, were enjoying unchallenged possession of their territory ever since the death of Sher Shāh at Kālinjar. Mālwa and Gujarat had thrown off the sovereignty of Delhi, even before the flight of Humāyun. Gondwana and Central India were in a state of disorderly independence. The Deccan states of Khāndesh, Ahmednagar, Berar, Bidar, Golkonda, and Bijāpur, were in the toils of their local politics and quarrels with Vijayanagara which was still in the zenith of its power. In the Arabian Sea, and on the west coast, the Portuguese were growing strong. The state of the Punjab and the north-west was still very unsettled and full of potential and actual danger.

‘Among the prominent events of the early days of the reign,’ says Nizām-ud-din Ahmad, ‘was the rebellion of Shāh Abu-l Ma’ali. . . The late King had a great partiality for him, and this fostered his pride, so that presumptuous ideas got mastery over him, and his conduct was marked by some unseemly actions. The Khān-khānan (Bairām Khān) arrested him, and was about to execute him ; but the young Emperor was mercifully disposed and was unwilling that the beginning of his reign should be stained with the execution of a descendant of the Saiyid before any crime had been proved against him. So he placed him in the custody of Pahlawān Kal-gaz (*kolwāl*) and sent him to Lahore. Abu-l Ma’ali escaped from custody, but after some adventure was recaptured and sent as a prisoner to the fort of Bayāna.’

Nizām-ud-din further states, ‘So long as Sikander Afghan (Sūr, was in the field, the officers of the Emperor were unable to take any measures for the capture of the fugitive, but sent all their forces against Sikander. The Imperial forces encountered the Afghans near the Siwālik mountains, and gained a victory which elicited gracious marks of approval from the Emperor.’ Even after this defeat, Sikander continued to hold on for some time longer, but finally, ‘being reduced to great extremities (as the *Tarikh-i Dāudi* adds), sent his son Abdur Rahamān from Mānkot in the Siwālik hills to Akbar Bādshāh, representing that he had committed many offences, on account of which he dared not present himself at Court, that he sent the few rarities he had with him as a peace-offering, and requested leave to be allowed to retire to Bengal and pass the remainder of his life in retirement. Akbar assented to all his solicitations, and



gave him leave to depart to Bengal. Sikander died three years after this surrender.'

'When Humāyun marched to Hindustan, he (had) consigned the government of Kabul and Ghazni to Munim Khān, one of his chief nobles, and he also made him guardian (*atālik*) of his son, Mirza Muhammad Hākīm. The city of Kandahār and its dependent territories were the *jagir* of Bairām Khān (*Khān-khānan*). By the kindness of His Majesty the government of Badakhshān was consigned to Mirza Suleimān. . . . But when the intelligence of Humāyun's death reached him, ambitious designs took hold of him, and he marched against Kabul and laid siege to it. Munim Khān wrote a full report of all the facts of the matter, and sent it to the Emperor. . . . When the news of the siege of Kabul arrived, an imperative *firmān* was issued, . . . and Mirza Suleimān, seeing that he could effect nothing by hostile means, . . . informed Munim Khān that, if his name were recited in the *khutbah*, he would take his departure. Munim Khān knew that the garrison of the fort was suffering from the protracted siege, so he consented that the name of Mirza Suleimān should be mentioned in the list of the titles of His Majesty the Emperor. When Mirza Suleimān was informed of this concession, he immediately departed for Badakhshān.

'Tārdi Beg Khān, who was one of the most famous of the nobles of Humāyun's reign, and held an exalted place in that monarch's estimation, in the same week that the Emperor died caused the *khutbah* to be read in Delhi in the name of the Emperor Akbar. He also kept under control the affairs of Delhi, Mewāt and other *parganas* which had but lately been brought under royal authority.' But he did not long survive after this.

As noticed earlier, Mahmūd Shāh Adali had despatched Hemu towards the Punjab upon hearing of the death of Humāyun. 'That general having scored a victory at Gwalior, laid siege to Agra, and having reduced it, proceeded to Delhi. Tārdi Beg Khān, the governor, seized with consternation, sent expresses to all the Mogul chiefs in the neighbourhood, to come to his aid. Hemu. . . . charged Tārdi Beg Khān with such impetuosity, that he compelled him to quit the field. The right wing of the Moguls was routed, the flight became general, and the city of Delhi also surrendered. Tārdi Beg Khān fled to Sirhind, leaving the whole country open to the enemy. . . . Bairām Khān. . . . caused Tārdi Beg Khān to be seized and behead-

ed for abandoning Delhi, where he might have defended himself. . . Bairām Khān remarked that lenity at such a crisis would lead to dangerous consequences, as the only hopes left to the Moguls, at the present moment, depended on every individual exerting himself to the utmost of his power. The King felt obliged to approve of this severe measure. The author of this work (Ferishta) has understood from the best informed men of the times, that, had Tārdi Beg Khān not been executed by way of example, such was the condition of the Mogul army, and the general feeling of those foreigners, that the old scene of Sher Shāh would have been acted over again. But, in consequence of this prompt though severe measure, the Chaghatai officers, each of whom, before, esteemed himself at least equal to Kaikobād and Kaikos, now found it necessary to conform to the orders of Bairām Khān, and to submit quietly to his authority.'

V. A. Smith agrees that "The punishment, although inflicted in an irregular fashion without trial was necessary and substantially just. It may be reasonably affirmed that failure to punish the dereliction of Tārdi Beg from his duty would have cost Akbar both his throne and his life."

### *Second Battle of Pānīpat :*

'Hemu, who had now assumed the title of Rāja Vikramjit, in Delhi, having attached Shādi Khān and other Afghan chiefs to his interest, marched out of the capital to meet the King, with an army as numerous as the locusts and ants of the desert.' So writes Ferishta. According to Ahmad Yadgar, when Hemu entered Delhi, he 'raised the Imperial canopy over him, and ordered coin to be struck in his name. He appointed governors of his own, and brought the Delhi territory and the neighbouring *parganas* under his control. The situation was undoubtedly a serious one. Akbar who, at the time of the capitulation of Delhi, was at Jalandhar, 'finding all his dominions, except the Punjab, wrested from him, was perplexed how to act. At length, feeling diffident of himself, both from youth and inexperience, he conferred on Bairām Khān the title of Khān Bāba (signifying 'father,' here meaning regent or protector),. . . and also required of Bairām Khān to swear on his part, by the soul of his deceased father Humāyun, and by the head of his own son, that he would be faithful to his trust. After this, a council being called by Bairām Khān, the majority of the officers were of opinion, and

as the enemy's force consisted of more than a hundred thousand horse, while the royal army could scarcely muster 20,000, it would be prudent to retire to Kabul. Bairām Khān not only opposed this measure, but was almost singular in his opinion that the King ought instantly to give battle to the enemy. The voice of Akbar which was in unison with the sentiments of Bairām Khān decided the question.

'Hemu began the action with his elephants, on the morning of the 2nd of Muharram, 964 H. (5 November 1556) in hopes of alarming the enemy's cavalry, unaccustomed to those animals; but the Mughals attacked them so furiously, after they had penetrated even to the centre of the army, where Khān Zamān commanded, that galled with lances, arrows and javelins, they became quite unruly, and disdaining the control of their drivers, turned and threw the Afghan ranks into confusion. Hemu mounted on an elephant of prodigious size, still continued the action with great bravery, at the head of 4,000 horse, in the very heart of the Mughal army; but being pierced through the eye with an arrow, he sank into his *howda* from extreme agony. The greater part of his army feared his wound was mortal and forsook him. Raising himself again, . . . he continued to fight with unabated courage, endeavouring, with the few men who remained about his person, to force his retreat through the enemy's line. . . . At length he was surrounded by a body of horse, and carried prisoner to Akbar, who was about two or three *kos* in the rear.'

'When Hemu was brought into the presence, Bairām Khān recommended the King to do a meritorious act by killing the infidel with his own hand. Akbar, in order to fulfil the wish of his minister, drew his sword, and touching the head of the captive, became entitled to the appellation of *Ghāzi*, while Bairām Khān drawing his own sabre, at a single blow severed the head of Hemu from his body.' \*

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\* This is Ferishta's account. Briggs, II, pp. 188-89. There are different versions of this incident, as well as of the details of the battle. Ahmad Yadgar says, 'The Prince, accordingly, struck him, and divided his head from his unclean body.'—E. & D., V, 65-6. Smith accepts this version, and observes: "Akbar, a boy of fourteen, cannot be justly blamed for complying with the instructions of Bairām Khān, who had a right to expect obedience; nor is there any good reason for supposing that the boy was more scrupulous than his officers. The official story, . . . appears to be the late invention of courtly flatterers, . . . . At the time of the battle of Pānipat, Akbar was an unregenerate lad, devoted to amusement, and must not be credited with the feelings of his

*Post-Pāṇipat Events up to 1560 :*

The principal events that happened after the execution of Hemu may be enumerated here for the sake of clearness thus :—

- (i) The occupation of Delhi and Agra ;
- (ii) The capture of Mewāt, and the execution of Hemu's father ;
- (iii) The acquisition of Ajmer ;
- (iv) The surrender of Gwalior ;
- (v) The annexation of Jaunpur ; and
- (vi) Attacks on Rantambhor and Mālwa.

Elphinstone rightly points out, "The real restoration of the House of Timūr may be dated from this period : it had been brought about entirely through the exertions of Bairām Khān, whose power was now at the highest pitch ever reached by a subject." At the end of this period we find the great Khān fallen from his high estate, almost suddenly if not unexpected, reminding us of Wolsey's memorable words to Thomas Cromwell on the fickleness of human fortune and the precariousness of royal favour.

The task before Akbar was a three-fold one : (1) to recover the dominions of the Crown ; (2) to establish his authority over his chiefs and (3) to restore in the internal administration that order which had been lost in the course of so many revolutions. "In the first years of Akbar's reign, his territory was confined to the Punjab and the country round Delhi and Agra. In the third year he acquired Ajmer without a battle ; early in the fourth, he obtained the fort of Gwalior ; and, not long before Bairām's fall he had driven the Afghans out of Lucknow and the country on the Ganges as far east as Jaunpur." The Muslim historians follow a merely chronological order, without using discretion even as regards the relative importance of events. We have therefore to cull out the most significant facts from this jumble, and rearrange them in an intelligible order. The following narrative is taken principally from the *Tabakat-i Akbari*, the *Akbar-Nāmā*, and the *Tarikh-i Firishṭa* :

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mature manhood."—*Akbar*, p. 39. Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad, who was Akbar's Chief Bakshi, however, definitely says, "Bairām Khān-Khānan then put Hemu to death with his own hand."—E. & D., V, p. 253. For a fuller discussion, see "The Death of Hemu", *J. R. A. S.*, 1916, p. 527.

'Next day (after the execution of Hemu) the army marched from Pānīpat, and without halting anywhere, went straight to Delhi. All the inhabitants of the city of every degree came forth to give His Majesty a suitable reception and to conduct him with due honour into the city. He remained there one month.' From here two important expeditions were led : (a) against Mewāt, because 'Intelligence was brought in that all the dependants of Hemu, with his treasures and effects, were in Mewāt'; (b) against Sikander Afghan (Sūr), whose reduction has already been described above. The first was led by Pir Muhammad Sarwāni. 'He captured all the persons, and took possession of all the valuables, and conducted them to the foot of the throne.' The *Akbar-Nāmā* gives other details, and says that Hemu's father was given the choice between conversion and death. When the old man refused to apostatize, 'Pir Muhammad gave an answer with the tongue of his sword.' Mewāt was conferred as a *jagir* upon Pir Muhammad, who was a confidential servant of Bairām Khān. On their way back from Alwar or Mewāt, 'Hāji Khān took possession of Ajmer and Nagaur and all those parts.... Muhammad Kāsim Khān was sent by the Emperor to take charge of Ajmer.'

The expedition against Sikander, up to a certain stage, was led by Akbar in person. Then, when his mother Mariam Makāni and other royal ladies returned from Kabul, 'the Emperor left Bairām Khān in command of the army, and went forth to meet them, receiving great comfort from the reunion.' Towards the end of March 1558, 'His Majesty arrived at Delhi. He then turned his attention to the concerns of his subjects and army, and justice and mercy held a prominent place in his councils. The Khān-khānan, in concert with the ministers and nobles of the State, used to attend twice a week in the *diwān-khāna*, and transact business under the direction and commands of His Majesty.... After the expiration of six months, the Emperor embarked in a boat to Agra, where he arrived on the 17th Muharram 966 H. (30 October 1558). At the time Agra was a town of comparatively small importance.'

"In the course of the third and fourth regnal years (1558-60) the gradual consolidation of Akbar's dominion in Hindustan was advanced by the surrender of the strong fortress of Gwalior in Central India, and the annexation of the Jaunpur province in the east. An attempt to take the castle of Rantambhor in Rajputāna

failed, and preliminary operations for the reduction of Mālwa were interrupted by the intrigues and troubles connected with Akbar's assertion of his personal fitness to rule, and the consequent fall of Bairām Khān, the Protector."

Here a brief reference may be made to the extinction of the Sūr dynasty of Sher Shāh. The end of Sikander Sūr has already been alluded to. Mahmūd Shāh Adali, who had established himself at Chunar and despatched Hemu to the west against the Mughals, was the only representative of the house now remaining. His fate is thus described in the *Tarikh-i Dāudi*.

'As for Adali, at the time of Hemu's death he was at Chunar, and at that juncture the son of Mahmūd Khān, by name Khizr Khān, ruler of Bengal, who had assumed the name of Sultan Bahādur, advanced with a large army to avenge the blood of his father; and Adali proceeded into Bihar to meet him as far as Mungir .. The sun had not yet risen when sultan Bahādur, with his army in array, made an attack upon Adali, and sounded the kettle-drums of war. Adali had only a few men with him, but behaved with considerable gallantry. The action was fought at the stream of Surājgarh about one *kos* more or less from Mungir, and about 12 *kos* from Patna, and there Adali was defeated and slain, in consequence of the paucity of his numbers, in the year 968 H. (1560 A.D.), after a reign of eight years.'

*The Fall of Bairām Khān* : Early in 1560, Akbar decided to assume the responsibilities of government himself. The reasons that led him to do this were various. 'The general management of Imperial affairs,' says Nizām-ud-dīn, 'was under the direction of Bairām Khān; but there were envious malignant men, who were striving to ingratiate themselves in His Majesty's favour, who lost no opportunity of speaking an ill word to pervert the mind of the Emperor.' The *Akbar-Nāmā*, on the contrary, states : 'Bairām's natural character was good and amiable. But through bad company, that worst misfortune of man, his natural good qualities were overclouded, and arrogance was fostered by the flattery.' Abu-l Faḍl also accuses him of conspiracy : 'At length Bairām's proceedings went beyond all endurance, and he formed some sinister designs in conspiracy with evil-minded flatterers.' Ferishta clinches the matter by adding, 'In short, so many insinuations were thrown out against Bairām Khān, particularly one of a design in favour of Abdul Kāsim Mīrza, the son of the late Kāmran Mīrza, that Akbar became alarmed, and thought it necessary to cur-

tail the Protector's authority.' Misunderstanding once generated, fed upon distrust, and every trifling accident was perverted in order to widen the breach.

"The Persian histories narrate the circumstances of Bairām Khān's fall at immense length and from different points of view," writes V. A. Smith; but "a concise summary may be sufficient to satisfy the curiosity of the modern reader. When Akbar had entered on his eighteenth year (A. D. 1560) and began to feel himself a man, the trammels of the tutelage in which he was held by his guardian became galling, and he desired to be a king in fact as well as in name. Those natural feelings were stimulated and inflamed by the ladies of his household and various courtiers who for one reason or another had grievances against the Protector. His appointment of Shaikh Gadai as *Sadr-i-Sudur* excited the sectarian animosity of all the Sunnis at court, who complained, and not without reason, that Bairām Khān showed excessive favour to the adherents of his own Shia sect. Many influential people had been offended by the execution of Tārdi Beg, and on several occasions Bairām Khān, presuming too much on his position, had behaved with undue arrogance. He was accused too, of making indiscreet remarks. Moreover, Akbar was annoyed by a special personal grievance, inasmuch as he had no privy purse, and his household was poorly paid, while the servants of the Protector grew rich. Bairām Khān on his side, was inclined to think that his services were indispensable, and was unwilling to surrender the uncontrolled power which he had exercised so long. Gradually it became apparent that Akbar or Bairām Khān must yield." Matters soon reached a crisis. "The advisers of Bairām Khān were divided in opinion. Shaikh Gadai, the *Sadr-i-Sudur*, and certain other counsellors advised their patron to seize Akbar's person and fight the matter out. But, Bairām Khān, after some hesitation, honourably refused to stain the record of a lifetime of loyalty by turning traitor, and intimated his intention to submit. Meantime, the courtiers for the most part had deserted the falling Minister, and, after the manner of their kind, had turned to worship the rising sun."

Akbar, on the other hand, acted promptly. He sent to Bairām Khān the following missive, through his tutor Mir Abdul Latif :— "As I was assured of your honesty and fidelity, I left all important affairs of State in your charge, and thought only of my own pleasures. I have now determined to take the reins of Government into my own hands, and it is desirable that you should make the pilgrimage to Mecca, upon which you have been so long intent. A suitable *jagir* out of the *parganas* of Hindustan will be assigned for your maintenance, the revenues of which shall be transmitted to you by your agents." Nizām-ud-dīn narrates the sequel well :

'When Mir Abdul Latif communicated this message to Khān-khānān, he listened attentively, and having parted from the Mir, he left Mewāt for Nagaur.... Upon reaching Nagaur, he sent his banner, kettle-drums, and all other marks of nobility, to the Emperor by the hands of Husain Kuli Beg.... The surrender of the banner and the other insignia of nobility gratified the Emperor.... But Pir Muhammad Khān Sarwāni, whom the Khān-khānān had banished from the country and sent to Mecca, had waited in Gujarat for the proper season (of sailing). On hearing of the disgrace of the Khān-khānān, he returned to Court with all possible speed. He met with a gracious reception, and was honoured with the title Nāsiru-l-Mulk as well as with a banner and kettle-drums. He was sent with a force to hasten Khān-khānān's departure for Mecca (or to use Badāuni's phrase, 'to pack him off as quickly as possible to Mecca without giving him any time for delay,') and accordingly marched after him....'

This provoked the Khān-khānān into a half-hearted revolt, but he soon submitted and started for the holy city. Bairām Khān, however, could not pursue his journey to its close, for he was murdered at Pātan by an Afghan whose father had been killed in the battle of Machiwārā. 'Some scoundrels then plundered the encampment of the deceased,' says Nizām-ud-dīn. Bairām Khān's body was picked up by some *fakirs* who gave it a burial. His family with great difficulty managed to reach Ahmedābad. His little son, Abdurrahim, then only four years of age, was brought up at Akbar's Court, and lived to become *Khān-khānān* and one of the greatest nobles of the Empire.

"The story of the transactions leading up to the fall and death of Bairām Khān," observes Smith, "leaves an unpleasant taste.... Both Humāyun and Akbar owed their recovery of the throne to Bairām Khān, and the obligations of gratitude required that when the time came for Akbar to take the reins into his own hands the demission of his faithful charioteer should be effected as gently as possible. But the many enemies of Bairām Khān were not in a humour to make his exit easy. If they could have had their way unobstructed, they would certainly have put him to death. The generosity of his reception after the failure of his rebellion, may be fairly attributed to young Akbar himself, who had had little to do with the previous transactions, for which Maham Anaga was responsible, as her panegyrist Abu-l Fazl affirms."

"*The Pardā Régime*": Akbar shook off the tutelage of Bairām Khān," says Smith, "only to bring himself under the 'monstrous regiment' of unscrupulous women. He had yet another effort to



make before he found himself and rose to the height of his essentially noble nature." Akbar was eighteen years of age and it may not seem unlikely that he came under the influence of the 'veil' even to a considerable extent ; but Smith's insinuation is not to be accepted without careful scrutiny. He himself admits that Akbar's "essentially noble nature" asserted itself, and one who had acted with such determination in overthrowing a giant like Bairām Khān, was not likely to put up, if at all, for long with "petticoat government of the worst kind." Within four years after the fall of Bairām Khān (1560-4) Akbar became completely his own master in every sense of the term. Two incidents of this period throw more light upon Akbar's independent character, and assertion of individuality, than any reflections of his critics who spin excessively over the malign influences of the 'monstrous regiment of women' and the 'petticoat government' over the youthful Emperor.

'A tragical event occurred in the course of this year (16 May 1562)', writes Nizām-ud-dīn. 'Ādhām Khān Kokaltash, son of Māham Anaga, could not endure to see the elevation of his compeers. In the presumption of youth and pride of wealth and station, he yielded to the incentives of Shihāb-ud-dīn Ahmad Khān, Munim Khān-khānān, and several other nobles, murdered Khān-i-Āzam (Shams-ud-dīn Muhammad Atga), then Prime-Minister, as he was sitting in his public office. Then, trusting to the favour and kindness which had been shown to him by the Emperor, he went and stood at the door of the *harem*. His Majesty rushed out of the *harem*, sword in hand, and the assassin was bound hand and foot, and cast over the parapet for his crime. . . . All those who had taken part in the conspiracy fled, and hid themselves through fear of punishment. . . . His Majesty showed great solicitude for the sons of the deceased minister, and for Māham Anaga ; but the latter, in anger and in grief for her son, fell ill and died forty days afterwards.'

The other incident was also of a similar character. The same writer records : 'Khwāja Muāzzam was maternal uncle of the Emperor. . . . This person had been guilty of several disgraceful actions during the reign of the Emperor Humāyun. . . . His unseemly conduct at length compelled the Emperor to banish him. . . . After his banishment the Khwāja stayed for a while in Gujarat, but subsequently returned to the Court of the Emperor. Bairām Khān then countenanced

him, and he received some degree of attention. Upon the disgrace of Bairām Khān, the Emperor took compassion on the Khwāja, and gave him some *jagir*. But the Khwāja's perverse and evil nature got the better of him, and he was guilty of some disgraceful deeds. To mention one : There was a woman named Fatima, attached to the *harem* of the late Emperor, and the Khwāja had taken to himself a daughter of her named Zuhra Agha. After some time he formed the design of putting her to death. Upon her mother being informed of this fact, she hastened to make it known to the Emperor, and to crave his protection. As soon as the Emperor arrived, and was informed of the Khwāja's cruel actions, which cried for punishment, he gave orders to his followers to well thrash him, and then to put him in a boat and souse him several times in the river. After this he sent him a prisoner to the fort of Gwālior, where he died in confinement.'

What Smith observes with regard to the latter incident, is equally true of both. He says, "The punishment inflicted on him proved definitely that Akbar was not to be deterred by family influence from doing justice on evil-doers, after the rough and ready manner of the times. The incident may be taken as marking the date of Akbar's final emancipation from the control of a palace clique. He continued to show all proper respect to his mother, *but he did not allow her to control his policy, which was conceived on principles distasteful to her.*"

*The Conquest of Mālwa* : The condition of this fertile plateau of Mālwa was such as seemed to invite a war of conquest with good prospects of success. Shuja'at or Shujāwal Khān, who practically ruled it independently under Adali Shāh Sūr, had died in the year of Akbar's accession (1556). 'He was succeeded by his son Baz Bahādur,' says the *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, 'and when the Afghans were scattered over Hindustan by the conquering Chaghatais, Baz Bahādur established himself as permanent ruler of Mālwa. When Bahādur Khān (Khān Zamān's brother) marched against him, the affairs of Bairām Khān came to a crisis, and the campaign in Mālwa was stayed.

'Baz Bahādur was,' according to Nizām-ud-dīn, 'the most accomplished man of his day in the science of music and in Hindu song. He spent much of his time in the society of musicians and singers... It now came to His Majesty's knowledge that Baz Bahādur had given himself up to sensuality, and cared nothing for the country. Tyrannical and overbearing men

had consequently oppressed the poor and helpless, and the peasantry and the people had been reduced to distress.' 'The honour of the Imperial throne required, continues the *Tabakat-i-Akbari*, 'that this country should be again brought under its control and find peace and security' (ever the plea of aggressive Imperialism!).

'So Ādham Khān (Māham Anaga's son referred to above), Pir Muḥammad Khān (Bairām Khān's enemy), and some other *amirs*, were nominated to effect the conquest of that country. They actually marched thither, and when they came within ten *kos* of *Sārangpur* (now in the Dewas State, Central India Agency), Baz Bahādūr, who was in that city, awoke from his slumber of neglect, and took up a position, which he fortified, two *kos* from the city... Ādham Khān sent forward an advance force to the entrenchments which Baz Bahādūr had thrown up around his army. Baz Bahādūr then threw off his apathy, and marched out to give battle. But the Afghan nobles in his army were disaffected, and made escape, and he himself was obliged to take flight (1561) towards Khāndesh and Burhānpur (Faizi). Rūpmati, his favourite wife, who used to recite poetry, several other wives, and all his treasures fell into the hands of the Imperial forces. As the fugitives were making off, a eunuch of Baz Bahādūr's wounded Rūpmati with a sword, to prevent her falling into the hands of strangers; and when Ādham Khān summoned her to his presence, she took poison and killed herself.

'Ādham Khān wrote an account of the victory to the Emperor. He retained all the ladies and musicians and singers, but he sent some elephants, under the charge of Sadik Khān, to Court. This retention of the ladies and other spoils displeased the Emperor, and made him deem it necessary to proceed to Mālwa in person. On the 21st Sha'ban 968 H., (27 April, 1561) the Emperor left Agra, and marched towards Mālwa... Ādham Khān now collected all his spoils, and presented them to the Emperor, who stayed a few days to refresh and enjoy himself, and then returned to Agra.'

Akbar, however, was not fully reconciled to Ādham Khān. It was only the intercession of the latter's mother, Māham Anaga, that had mollified him for the time being. In November 1561, Shams-ud-dīn Muḥammad Khān Atga, who came from Kabul, was entrusted with the management, as minister, of all affairs political, financial, and military; and perhaps on his advice, Ādham Khān was recalled from Mālwa. Māham Anaga was opposed to Atga Khān's high appointment, and she was very much vexed to find Akbar fast slipping out of her control. But at the same time, it is strange that Pir Muḥammad was allowed to succeed Ādham Khān in the charge of Mālwa; for both were equally unworthy. Both had been guilty of excesses in Mālwa; but perhaps the guilt of the former weighed more with the Emperor for his misappropriation and contumacious spirit.

'Pir Muhammad, after his appointment in place of Adham Khān, assembled the forces of Mālwa and marched to subdue the countries of Asir and Burhānpur. The governors of Asir and Burhānpur, and Baz Bahādur, who lived in this vicinity since his flight from Mālwa, now concerted together, and assisted by all the *zamindars* of the country, they assembled a force with which they assailed Pir Muhammad Khān. Unable to resist, Pir Muhammad fled towards Māndu, and when he came to the Narbada ... he was thrown off (his horse) into the water and drowned, thus receiving the recompense of his deeds,' says the *Tabakat-i Akbari*. 'The other nobles, on reaching Mālwa, found that the country was lost, so they pursued their course to the Court of the Emperor. Baz Bahādur pursued them, and brought the whole of Mālwa once more into his power. Those *amirs* who had abandoned Mālwa, and had come to Court without orders were imprisoned for a time, and then set at liberty.

'Abdulla Khān Uzbek now received orders to retrieve this disaster in Mālwa, and several other Khāns were directed to assist him. Towards the end of the year 969 H. (1662 A.D.) Abdulla and his auxiliaries entered Mālwa, and Baz Bahādur, being unable to withstand him, fled to the hills of Kambalmir'. A force was sent in pursuit, and coming up with the fugitives, killed many of them. Baz Bahādur found protection for some time with Rājā Udai Singh, one of the chief Rājās of Mārwar, and afterwards he repaired to Gujarat, but eventually he threw himself upon the mercy of the Emperor, and sought refuge from the frowns of fortune. (According to Badāuni, he was imprisoned for some time, but soon after his release he died; according to Faizi, he was granted a *mansab* of 2,000.) Abdulla Khān remained at Māndu and the other *amirs* returned to their *jagirs*."

In July 1564, Abdulla Khān showed signs of rebellion, and Akbar was obliged to March against him in person. Abdulla Khān was soon driven to the confines of Gujarat, whence he made his way to Jaunpur and died there during the rebellion of Khān Zamān, in 1565. 'The Imperial army then moved, and, on the new moon of Zī-l hijja, 791 H. reached Māndu. The *zamindars* of the neighbourhood came in to pay their allegiance, and met with a gracious reception. Mir Mubārak Shāh, ruler of Khāndesh, sent a letter and suitable presents by the hands of ambassadors to the Emperor. In Muharram 972 H. (August 1564), the Imperial camp moved from Māndu. .... Karra Bahādur Khān was appointed governor of Māndu. .... Proceeding by way of Mārwar and Gwalior, the Emperor reached Agra on the 3rd Rabi-u-l awal.'

*First Rajput Alliance* : 'On the 8th Jumada-l awwal 969 H. (January 1562) the Emperor started to pay a visit to the tomb of Khwāja Muin-ud-dīn Chishti at Ajmer. When he reached the town

of Sāmbhar, Rāja Bihāri Mal\* (Kachwaha), one of the chief Rājas of that country, came with great loyalty and respect, along with his son Bhagwān Dās, to pay his services to His Majesty. He was received with great honour and attention, and his daughter, an honourable lady, was accepted by His Majesty, and took her place among the ladies of the Court. From thence he proceeded to Ajmer and he dispensed many gifts and pensions among the inhabitants of that noble city.

*Capture of Mairtha :* 'Mirza Sharaf-ud-dīn Husain, who held a *jagir* in the territory of Ajmer, came to pay his homage. He was sent with several other *amirs* of that province to effect the conquest of the fort of Mairtha, about 20 *kos* from Ajmer, which was held by Jai Mal, the commandant of Rai Maldeo. His Majesty then started for Agra, and making forced marches, he performed the distance, one hundred and twenty *kos*, in a day and a night. (*The Tarikh-i Alfī* gives the more probable time of *three* days.) . . . When the victorious army went to take possession of the fort, Jai Mal marched out with his men. But Deodas, in shame and pride, set fire to the property which was in the fortress, and then sallied forth at the head of a party of Rajputs, and passed in front of the royal army. . . . Many of the royal soldiers fell, and nearly 200 Rajputs were slain. . . . The fort of Mairtha was then occupied by the Imperial forces.'

*Brave Rāni Durgāvati of Gondwana :* *The Tarikh-i Alfī* gives the following brief notice of an epic incident, belonging to this period (1654), concerning the conquest of *Garha* in the Jabbalpore District :—

'Khawāja Abdul Majid, who had received the title of Asaf Khān, was appointed governor of Karra, and in that province he rendered good service. One of his services was the conquest of Garha, a territory abounding in hills and jungles, which had never been conquered by any ruler of Hindustan since the rise of the faith of Islam. At this time it was governed by a woman called Rāni (*Durgāvati*), and all the dogs (!)

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\* Bihāri or Bihār Mal or Bhārmal was the Rāja of Amber (Jaipur). His daughter became the mother of Akbar's successor Jahāngīr, and came to be known as Maryam-Zamāni. This marriage, according to Dr. Beni Prasad, "symbolised the dawn of a new era in Indian politics; it gave the country a line of remarkable sovereigns; it secured to four generations of Mughal Emperors the services of some of the greatest captains and diplomats that medieval India produced." Rāja Mān Singh was Bhārmal's grandson.

of that country were very faithful and devoted to her. Asaf Khān had frequently sent emissaries into her country on various pretexts, and when he had learnt all the circumstances and peculiarities of the country, and the position and treasures of the *Rāni*, he levied an army to conquer the country. The *Rāni* came forth to battle with nearly 500 elephants and 20,000 horse. The armies met and both did their best. An arrow struck the *Rāni*, who was in front of her horsemen, and when that noble woman saw that she must be taken prisoner, she seized a dagger from her elephant-driver and plunged it into her stomach, and so died. Asaf Khān gained the victory, and stopped the advance at the *talua* of Chaurāgarh, where the treasures of the rulers of Garha were kept. The son of the *Rāni* shut himself up in the fort, but it was taken the same day, and the youth was trampled to death by horses. So much plunder in jewels, gold, silver, and other things was taken, that it was impossible to compute even the tenth part of it. Out of all the plunder, Asaf Khān sent only fifteen elephants to Court, and retained all the rest for himself.

Gondwana formed the northern part of the present Central Provinces. The fort of Chaurāgarh is now in the Narsingpur District. When it fell into Asaf Khān's hands, its treasures contained, besides those mentioned above, 'coined and uncoined gold, decorated utensils, pearls, figures, pictures, jewelled and decorated idols, figures of animals made wholly of gold, and other rarities.' "The coin was said to include a hundred large pots full of the gold *ashrafis* of Alā-ud-dīn Khaljī."

The gallant queen had, fifteen years previously, become the regent for her minor son Bīr Nārāyan. Although the Rāja had now attained manhood, she continued to exercise all authority. "The *Rāni* was a princess of the famous Chāndel dynasty of Mahoba, which had been one of the great powers of India five hundred years earlier. Her impoverished father had been obliged to lower his pride and give his daughter to the wealthy Gond Rāja, who was far inferior in social position." She proved herself worthy of her noble ancestry, and governed her adopted country with courage and capacity, 'doing great things', as Abu-l Faḍl remarks, 'by dint of her far-seeing abilities. She had great contests with Baz Bahādur and the Miahhs and was always victorious. She had 20,000 good cavalry with her in her battles, and 1000 famous elephants. The treasures of the Rājas of that country fell into her hands. She was a good shot with the gun and arrow, and continually went a-hunting and shot animals of the chase with her gun. It was her custom that when she heard that a tiger had made his appearance, she did not drink water

till she had shot him.' "Akbar's attack on a princess of a character so noble," observes Smith, "was mere aggression, wholly unprovoked and devoid of all justification other than the lust for conquest and plunder."

*Rebellions East and West :*

The principal rebellions of this period were two : That of Mirza Muhammad Hākīm, Akbar's half-brother, at Kabul ; and that of Khān Zamān at Jaunpur. They were interconnected in so far as the one sympathised with the other, and built his hopes of success on simultaneous action.

*Kabul :* In 1564 'Mirza Muhammad Hākīm and his people, being greatly annoyed by Badakhshānis, drove them out of Kabul. Mirza Suleimān then came with a large army to take revenge for this expulsion. . . . Hākīm fled to Peshāwar, and appealed for Akbar's help. . . . when the statement of Mirza Muhammad Hākīm reached the Imperial Court, an order was given directing all the nobles and *jagirdars* of the Punjab. . . . to assemble their forces and march to the assistance of Mirza Muhammad Hākīm. . . . Mirza Suleimān on the approach of the royal forces fled to Badakhshān only to return again. Mirza Hākīm once more sought refuge in flight, and again appealed to Akbar. The Emperor this time appointed Faridun Khān, maternal uncle of the Mirza, and a noble of the Imperial Court, to go to his assistance.

But Faridun laboured to instigate the Mirza to hostile attempts, representing that it would be easy for him to effect the conquest of Lahore. Sultan Ali, a clerk who had fled from the Court, and Hasan Khān, brother of Shihāb-ud-dīn Ahmad Khān, who was in Kabul, helped to excite the hostile spirit and added their voices to Faridun's. Won over by their persuasions, the Mirza broke into open revolt, and marched against Lahore. Upon coming into the neighbourhood of the city, he began to plunder. Some of the nobles of the Punjab . . . hearing of these proceedings, assembled at Lahore. They looked to the safety of the fort, and wrote an account of the Mirza's rebellion and hostile acts to the Emperor. On arriving near Lahore, the Mirza advanced to the foot of the fortifications ; but the *amirs* of the Punjab repulsed him with the fire of their guns and muskets. At length, when intelligence came of the advance of the royal forces, the Mirza, feeling unable to offer resistance, took to flight (1565 A.D.).

*Khān Zamān's Rebellion* : Khān Zamān and his brother rebelled in the eastern provinces in 1565. In May, Akbar was obliged to take the field in person, and crossed the Jamuna. In December 1565, Khān Zamān gave an undertaking not to cross the Ganges, and Akbar came back to Agra in March 1566. Meantime Mirza Muhammad Hākīm invaded the Punjab, under the circumstances described above. "He was encouraged by the Uzbek rebellions to claim the throne of Hindustan ; and Khān Zamān went so far as to recite the *khutbah*, or prayer for the King, in his name." Akbar set forth against his brother in November 1566 ; but when he learnt of his defeat and flight, he returned to Lahore where he heard of the rebellion of the Mirzas (February 1567). The Mirzas, having first broken out at Sāmbhal, near Morādābad, where they had been granted estates, had been driven into Mālwa. In May 1567, Akbar had once more to march against Khān Zamān, who had broken his plighted word, to suppress him finally. The details of these events are thus set forth by Nizām-ud-dīn in the *Tabakat-i-Akbari* :

'In consequence of the severe proceedings against Abdulla Khān Uzbek which have been narrated above (viz., his expulsion from Mālwa on account of his rebellious attitude), an opinion got abroad that the Emperor had a bad opinion of the Uzbeks.' The disaffected nobles, among whom was Ibrāhīm Khān the uncle of Khān Zamān, 'resolved to consult Ali Kuli Khān (Khān Zamān), who was one of their own tribe, and was the Emperor's representative in their part of the country.... After consultation.... they determined to rebel. Ibrāhīm Khān and Sikander Khān went to Lucknow, full of hostile designs. Khān Zamān and his brother went to Karra Manikpur, and there began their revolt.

'Between Khān-khānān (who was in command of the Imperial army) and Khān Zamān there was an old and warm friendship, and after prolonged negotiations, Khān Zamān agreed to surrender with proper hostages. .... The Emperor, out of kindness that he felt for Khān-khānān, said, "For your sake, I forgive their offences, but I am not satisfied that they will remain faithful."... The Emperor then went to visit the fort of Chunar, celebrated for its height and strength. He made three days' march from Jaunpur to Benares, and there rested several days. But when the Emperor had gone to Chunar, Khān Zamān crossed the river, and went to Muhammadābad, one of the dependencies of Jaunpur, and from thence sent parties of troops to occupy Ghāzīpur and Jaunpur. As soon as the Emperor returned to his camp, he was informed of this evil proceeding of Ali Kuli Khan's, and he said reproachfully to Khān-khānān, "No sooner had I left this place than Ali Kuli Khān broke the conditions of his pardon." Khān-khānān looked mortified, and endeavoured to make excuse.



'Orders were given to Ashraf Khān *Mir Bakshi* to go to Jaunpur, and make prisoner the mother of Ali Kuli Khān, who was in that city, and to confine her in the fort of Jaunpur. He was also to secure every rebel he could lay hold of.... The Emperor himself, with a considerable force, started off upon a rapid march against Ali Kuli Khān.... The forces under the Emperor occupied the banks of the river Sarwar (Saru), and after searching all the jungles, they found that Khān Zamān had gone off to the Siwālik hills. News now arrived that Bahādur Khān had gone to Jaunpur, and liberated his mother. He made Ashraf Khān prisoner, and formed the design of making an attack upon the royal camp. Upon learning this the Emperor gave up the chase of Khān Zamān and turned towards Jaunpur.... where he ordered a pleasant site to be selected, and a splendid palace to be built; and the nobles also were to build houses and palaces suitable to their rank. For it was determined that so long as Ali Kuli Khān and his brother (Bahādur Khān) should remain in this world, Jaunpur should be the capital of the State. The royal forces were sent in pursuit of the fugitives, with instructions to take no rest until they had inflicted the punishment due to them.

'When Ali Kuli heard of this, he left the Siwālik hills, whither he had fled, and came to the side of the Ganges. Then he sent a faithful follower to Court with a message. Khān-khānan.....once more made intercession for Khān Zamān; and the Emperor in his great kindness, once more pardoned his offences.... Then, as required he expressed contrition for his faults, took an oath of fidelity, and bade his visitor farewell. The Emperor's opponents having repented of their unrighteous deeds and made their submission, he returned to the capital in the beginning of the 11th year of the reign, 937 H. (12 March 1566).

*Asaf Khān's Surrender.*: 'The Emperor's mind being now relieved from all anxiety in respect of Ali Kuli Khān and other rebels, Madhi Kāsim Khān, one of the old nobles of the Imperial household, was sent with 3,000 or 4,000 men to Garha to settle the affairs of that country, and to capture Asaf Khān. (During the campaign against Khān Zamān, he had suddenly absconded, being afraid lest he should be called on to render the account of his ill-gotten wealth from Chaurāgarh). Before Madhi Kāsim Khān arrived, Asaf Khān quitted the fort of Chaurāgarh, and went off into the jungles. He wrote a letter full of humility and repentance to the Emperor, asking permission to go on the pilgrimage. Madhi Kāsim Khān, on arriving in Garha, secured all the country, and went in pursuit of Asaf Khān, who then wrote letters to Khān Zamān, proposing to go and join him. Khān Zamān wrote in reply, inviting him to come to him. Asaf Khān, deceived by this, went to Jaunpur; but at the very first audience he beheld the arrogance of Khān Zamān, and was sorry that he had come. (Then after some adventure he went to the Emperor, when he was at Lahore in pursuit of Mirza Muhammad Hākim, and received pardon for his offences.)

*Revolt of the Mirzas*: 'During the stay at Lahore (also), a letter

arrived from Agra, from Munim Khān Khān-khānan, with the intelligence that the sons of Muhammad Sultan Mirza and Ulugh Mirza, by name Ibrāhim Husain Mirza, Muhammad Husain Mirza, and Shāh Mirza, who held *jagirs* in the sarkār of Sāmbhal, had broken into rebellion. And when he, Khān-khānan, had marched as far as Delhi to punish them, they had heard of his approach, and had gone off towards Māndu. These Mirzas were Akbar's distant cousins, whose forebears had received favours at the hands of both Bābur and Humāyun. 'To every one of them Akbar gave suitable *jagirs*, and advanced them to the dignity of *amir*. They were constantly in attendance upon His Majesty, rendering their services. When the Emperor returned from his Jaunpur campaign, they repaired to their *jagirs*, and remained in Sāmbhal. But when His Majesty went to Lahore, to repress the attempt of Mirza Muhammad Hākim, they broke out in rebellion.'

*Khān Zamān's Final Suppression* : 'A command was given that Asaf Khān, along with Majnun Khān (who had once previously resisted Khān Zamān), should go to Karra-Manikpur, and provide for the safety of the dependent territories. Intelligence now arrived that Ali Kuli Khān, Bahādur Khān, and Sikander Khān had again broken their engagements, and risen in rebellion (and caused the *khutbah* to be read in the name of Mirza Muhammad Hākim). Hereupon the Emperor placed their *vakil* Mirza Mirak Rizwi in custody of Khān Bāki Khān and leaving the direction of the affairs of the Punjab in the charge of Mir Muhammad Khān and all the Atkas, on the 12th Ramzān 974 H. (22 March 1567), he started on his return to Agra.

'Upon arriving at Agra, the Emperor was informed that Khān Zamān was besieging the fort of Shergarh, four *kos* distant from Kanauj. . . . Nine-teen days afterwards, the Emperor left Khān-khānan in charge of the city, and on Monday, the 23rd Shawwal 974 H., marched towards Jaunpur. When he reached the *pargana* of Saket, Ali Kuli Khān decamped to his brother, who was in Manikpur. . . . when he reached the *pargana* of Rai Bareilly he learnt that the rebels had crossed the river Ganges with the object of proceeding towards Kālpi (*Akbar-Nāmā* says 'Gwalior'). He then directed his camp to proceed to the fort of Karra, and then marched with all possible speed to the ferry of Manikpur. (There had been heavy rains; the country was flooded and the river much swollen). There he crossed the river upon the back of an elephant, and from 1,000 to 1,500 men swam the river along with him. Asaf Khān and Majnun Khān, who were in advance, constantly sent back intelligence of the enemy. It so happened that Ali Kuli Khān had occupied themselves all that night in wine-drinking and licentiousness, and were heedless of everything else. The war-like demonstrations against them they attributed to the daring of Majnun Khān, and they would not believe that the Emperor was near at hand.

'On Sunday, the 1st Zi-l-hijja, the Emperor made his dispositions for action. He himself took command of the centre. Asaf Khān and all the Atkas were on the right; Majnun Khān and other *amirs* were on the left.

... The enemy, being now fully aware of the Emperor's advance, prepared themselves for death. Ali Kuli Khān received a wound from an arrow, and while he was engaged in drawing it out, another arrow struck his horse. The animal became restive, and Ali Kuli Khān also was thrown. An elephant named Narsing now came up, and was about to crush him when Ali Kuli Khān cried out to the driver, "I am a great man; if you take me alive to the Emperor, he will reward you." The driver paid no heed to his words, but drove the animal over him, and crushed him under foot. When the field was cleared of the enemy, Nāzar Bahādur placed Bahādur Khān behind him on a horse, and conducted him to the presence of the Emperor. By the efforts of the *amirs* he was put to death. After a little while, the head of Ali Kuli (Khān Zamān) was also brought. The Emperor then alighted from his horse, and returned thanks for his victory. This battle was fought at the village of Mankarwāl, one of the dependencies of Josi and Prayāg, now known as Illahabas, on the 1st Zi-l-hijja, 974 H.

He then proceeded to Benares. Every follower of Ali Kuli Khān who came forward and was submissive to the Emperor's power was pardoned. From Benares he went to Jaunpur, and remained three days in sight of that city. Thence proceeding to the Karra Manikpur fortress he rested there and sent word to Munim Khān. The Khān-khānan, when he came, waited upon His Majesty, and was invested with the care and government of the *jagirs* of Ali Kuli Khān and Bahādur Khān in Jaunpur, Benares, the fort of Chunar and Zamāniya, as far as the ferry of Chaunsa. He also received the present of a splendid robe, and of a horse. In the midst of the rainy season in Zi-l-hijja, 974 H., the Emperor began his homeward march, and in Muharram 975, arrived at Agra.

#### *Conquest of Rajputāna :*

"In September 1567 Akbar resolved on the most famous and tragically interesting of his martial enterprises, the siege and capture of Chitor, which deserves narration in exceptional detail," observes Smith. The reasons for the undertaking are variously stated: the Rāṇa had given shelter to Baz Bahādur after his flight from Mālwa, he had assisted the rebellious Mirzas; he had not come forward, like the ruler of Amber (Bihar Mal), to offer his submission or a princess of the blood royal in marriage to the Emperor, etc., etc. But the fact is, as Ishwari Prasad points out, "There could be no Indian Empire without the Rajputs, no social or political synthesis without their intelligent and active co-operation... The conquest of Mewar was therefore part of a larger enterprise, and the Emperor intended to treat it as a stepping-stone to his further conquest of the whole of Hindustan." Amber had already come into the Imperial net; the fall of Chitor was followed by the surrender of Rantambhor, Kālinjar, Jesalmir, Bikāner, and Jodhpur.

It is well to recollect here that Rāṇa Sanga, lion in the field of battle, had died about the same time as his vanquisher Bābur, in 1530. His successor in vain called upon Humāyun for succour when Chitor was attacked by Bahādur Shāh of Gujarat, in 1534 ; and the proud and hoary Chitor lay prostrate and impotent before the adventurous Afghan Sher Shāh, in 1544. "It was the ill fate of Mewar to be cursed with a craven prince (Udai Singh) at the critical moment when India was ruled by the ablest, and perhaps the most ambitious, sovereign who has ever swayed her sceptre. 'Udai Singh,' Tod tells us, 'had not one quality of a sovereign ; and wanting martial virtue, the common heritage of his race, he was destitute of all.' The historian of the Rajputs justly exclaims that 'well had it been for Mewar had the poniard fulfilled its intention, and had the annals never recorded the name of Udai Singh in the catalogue of the princes.'"

*The Siege of Chitor* : 'Now that the Emperor had returned to the capital, with his mind at rest in respect of Ali Kuli Khān and other rebels,' writes Nizām-ud-dīn, 'he turned his attention towards the capture of Chitor. On his way thither, the Emperor deemed it necessary to suppress the Mirzas, who had fled from Sāmbhal and taken refuge in these parts. 'He therefore appointed Shihāb-ud-dīn Ahmad Khān and other *amirs* to *jagirs* in Māndu, and charged them with that duty. When the *amirs* reached Ujjain, which is one of the chief places in that country, they found that the Mirzas, on hearing of the Emperor's approach, had assembled together and fled to Gujarat....So the *amirs* obtained possession of Māndu without opposition.

'When the Emperor marched from Gagraun, Rāṇa Udai Singh left 7,000 or 8,000 men to hold Chitor, under the command of a Rajput named Jai Mal, a valiant chief, who had fought against Mirza Sharaf-ud-dīn Husain, in the fort of Mairtha, as before related. The Rāṇa himself, with all his relatives and dependants, took refuge in the hills and jungles,—and soon built for himself a new capital at Udai-pur.

'The fort of Chitor is seated on a hill, which is about one *kos* in height, and has no connexion with any other hill. The length of the fortress is three *kos*. It contains plenty of running water. Under His Majesty's orders, the ground round the fort was portioned out among the different *amirs*. The royal forces were ordered to plunder and lay waste the country, and Asaf Khān was sent to Rāmpur (about 50 miles south-east of Chitor),

a prosperous town of the province. He attacked and captured the fort, and ravaged all the neighbourhood. Husain Kuli Khān was sent with a detachment towards Udaipur and Kumbalmir (34 miles north-west of Udaipur), which is one of the chief fortresses in that country, and is the residence of the Rāṇa. He ravaged several towns and villages, but finding no trace of the Rāṇa, he returned to the Imperial camp.

'When the siege of Chitor had been carried on some time, the Emperor ordered the construction of *sabats*, and the digging of mines. About 5000 builders and carpenters and stone-masons were collected, and began their work of constructing *sabats* on two sides of the fort. While the *sabat* was in course of construction, the garrison kept up such a fire of guns and muskets, that more than 100 of the workmen and labourers employed in it were killed daily, although they covered themselves with shields of bull-hide. Corpses were used in the walls like bricks. In a short time, the *sabat* was completed, and carried close to the fort.

'On the night of Tuesday, 25th Sha'ban 975, the Imperial forces assembled from all sides, and the wall being breached, a grand struggle began. Jai Mal, commander of the fortress, came into the breach to encourage his men. The Emperor was seated in a gallery, which had been erected for him on the *sabat*, and he had a musket in his hand. The face of Jai Mal was discernible by the light which was cast upon the spot by the fire of the guns and muskets. The Emperor took aim at him, and so wounded him that he died on the spot. The garrison was disheartened by the fall of their leader, and each man hurried to his own home. They collected their wives and children, property and effects, in one place and burnt them. This proceeding in the language of the infidels of Hind, is called *jauhār*. The royal forces were now massed, and they assaulted the breaches in several places. Many of the infidels rushed forward to defend them, and fought most valiantly. His Majesty, seated on the *sabat*, beheld the exertions of his men with an approving eye. Adil Muhammad Kandahāri... and others exhibited great valour and daring, and received great praise. All that night fighting went on, but in the morning, which was a glorious morning, the place was subdued. The Emperor mounted on an elephant, and, attended by his devoted followers on foot, entered the fortress. An order for a general massacre was issued, and more than 8,000 Rajputs who were in the place received the reward of their deeds. After noon, the slaughter was stayed, and the Emperor returned to his camp, where he remained three days. Asaf Khān was appointed to rule this country, and His Majesty started for the capital, on Tuesday, the 25th Sha'ban.

'When the Emperor started to effect the conquest of Chitor, he vowed that if he were successful, he would make a pilgrimage to the tomb of Khwāja Muin-ud-dīn Chishti, which is at Ajmer. In performance of this vow, he set off for Ajmer, and walked all the way on foot. On Sunday, the 7th Ramzān, he reached Ajmer. He perform-

ed all the observances of the pilgrimage, and made the poor and needy glad with his alms and offerings. He remained there ten days, and then departed for the capital. (He reached Agra in March 1568.)

*Rantambhor* : 'After a stay of some months at Agra, the Emperor resolved to attack the fort of Rantambhor, renowned as one of the strongest and highest fortresses of Hindustan. An order was issued for the assembling of those troops which had not been engaged in the siege of Chitor....

'When the *amirs* had marched several stages, intelligence reached the Emperor of disturbances created by the Mirzas, who had escaped from Gujarat, and laid siege to the fort of Ujjain, in Mālwa. The Emperor then directed that Kalij Khān with the *amirs* and the army that had been sent to Rantambhor, should undertake the repression of the revolt of the Mirzas. The two forces united according to the order....When the Mirzas were apprised of their approach, they raised the siege of Ujjain, and went off towards Māndu....All marched together in pursuit of the Mirzas, who fled before them from Māndu to the banks of the Narbada. They crossed the river in such confusion, that many of their men were drowned....The Mirzas then fled to Gujarat...The remainder of this transaction will be told in its proper place....

'The Emperor marched at the opening of the year (22 February 1569) towards Rantambhor, and in a short period arrived at the foot of the fort. The place was invested, batteries raised, *sabats* constructed, and several breaches were effected by battering with cannon. Rāi Sūrjan, the commander of the fort, when he observed the progress of the siege, was brought down from the pinnacle of his pride and insolence and he sent out two sons, Dudh and Bhoj by name, to ask for terms. His Majesty received kindly the two young men, who had come to seek his mercy, and pardoned their transgressions. He sent Husain Kuli Khān, who had received the title of Khān-Jahān into the fort to give assurances to Rāi Sūrjan. He did so and brought the Rāi to wait upon the Emperor when he made a frank submission, and was enrolled among the royal servants.

*Kālinjar* : 'During the interregnum of the Afghans, Rāja Rām Chandar had purchased the fort of Kālinjar at a high price from Bijilli Khān. The renown of the conquest of the forts of Chitor and Rantambhor spread through the world, and the men of the Imperial army who held *jagirs* in the neighbourhood of Kālinjar were constantly forming plans for the capture of that fort, and were anxious to begin the war. Rāja Rām Chandar was an experienced and pru-

dent man, and considered himself an adherent of the Imperial throne. He sent by his envoy the keys of the fortress and suitable offerings, with congratulations for the victories achieved, to the Emperor. On the same day the custody of the fortress was given into the charge of Majnun Khān, one of the *jagirdars* of the quarter, and a friendly *firmān* was sent to Rāja Rām Chandar. The fortress came into the possession of the Emperor in the month of Safar 977 H., in the fourteenth year of his reign.

*Jodhpur and Bikāner* : 'When the Emperor was staying at Nagaur, Chander Sen, son of Rāi Maldeo, came to pay his allegiance and make his offerings. Rāja Kalyān Mal, the Rāja of Bikāner, also came with his son, Rāi Singh, to wait upon His Majesty, and present his tribute. The loyalty and sincerity of both father and son being manifest, the Emperor married Kalyān Mal's daughter. For fifty days he shed the light of his justice and equity upon the poor people of Nagaur. From thence he proceeded to Ajodan, to pay a visit to the tomb of Sheikh Farid-ud-din Masud Ganj-i-Shaker. Rāi Kalyān Mal, who was so fat that he could not ride on horseback, now received permission to return to Bikāner, but his son was ordered to remain in attendance upon His Majesty, in which he received high promotion.'

#### *Results of the Rajput Campaigns :*

These campaigns by no means completed the reduction of Rajputāna. A still more arduous war remained to be waged against the intrepid Rāṇa Pratāp, who had 'the courage never to submit or yield.' But there was a respite of about seven years, from August 1569 to July 1576, before the 'sword of Islam' again struck the Hindu with his own hand. Meantime, it is worth while taking note of some of the outstanding features and results of these early efforts. Whatever might have been Akbar's motives in the conquest, he had stormed and taken Mairtha, "the second city in Marwar"; Rāja Bhārmal of Amber had "anticipated the King, enrolled himself and his son Bhagwāndās amongst his vassals, given the Chaghatai a daughter to wife, and held his country as a fief of the Empire." More had been achieved since. The proud Rāṇa had been driven to seek refuge in the hills; Chitor had been taken; so also Rantambhor and Kālinjar, Jodhpur and Bikāner too had submitted, at least for the

time being. Tod characterises these events in the following manner :—

'Akbar was the real founder of the Empire of the Moguls, the first successful conqueror of Rajput independence ; to this end his virtues were powerful auxiliaries, as by his skill in the analysis of the mind and its readiest stimulant to action, he was enabled to guild the chains with which he bound them. To these they became familiarised by habit, especially when the throne exerted its power in acts gratifying to national vanity, or even in ministering to the more ignoble passions. But generations of the martial races were cut off by his sword and lustres rolled away ere his conquests were sufficiently confirmed... He was long ranked with Shabudin, Allaudin, and other instruments of destruction, and with every just claim ; like these he constructed a *Mumba* (pulpit) for the Koran from the altars of Eklinga ; yet he finally succeeded in healing wounds his ambition had inflicted, and received from millions that meed of praise, which no other of his race ever obtained.'

Akbar came into contact with three distinct types of Rajputs : (1) those like Amber that easily submitted, and were readily assimilated into the Imperial system ; (2) those that put up a decent fight or came to an honourable settlement with the conqueror, like Rantambhor ; and (3) those that refused to be assimilated, and sought refuge either in flight or persistent fight, like the Rānas of Mewar. The first two by their very submission showed a spirit of compromise and assimilation which was quite necessary for the building up of a united nation towards which Akbar was bending the whole might of his genius ; the last, by its 'eternal hatred, unconquerable pride, and courage never to submit or yield' contributed its own quota to the strength and nobility of our national character. The treaty that was drawn up between Akbar and the Harās is noteworthy for its dignified statesmanship :—

The *Annals of Bundi* record : 'A treaty was drawn up on the spot, and mediated by the Prince of Amber (Jaipur), which presents a good picture of Hindu feeling. They were (1) that the chiefs of Bundi should be exempted from that custom, degrading to a Rajput, of sending a *dola* (bride) to the royal *harem* ; (2) exemption from the *jizya* or poll-tax ; (3) that the chiefs of Bundi should not be compelled to cross the Attock ; (4) that the vassals of Bundi should be exempted from the obligation of sending female relatives "to hold a stall in the Mina bazār" at the palace, on the festival of *Nauroz* (New Year's Day) ; (5) that they should have the privilege of entering the *Diwān-i-ām*, or "Hall of Audience", completely armed ; (6) that their sacred edifices should be respected ; (7)



that they should never be placed under the command of a Hindu leader ; (8) that their horses should not be branded with the Imperial *dagh* (a flower branded on the forehead) ; (9) that they should be allowed to beat their *nakkaras*, or kettle-drums, in the streets of the capital as far as the Lāl Darwāza or Red Gate ; (10) that they should not be commanded to make the "prostration" (*sijda*) on entering the presence ; and (11) that Bundi should be to the Harās what Delhi was to the King, who should guarantee them from any change of capital.'

But, as noted above, "the most famous and tragically interesting" of Akbar's martial enterprises, *viz.*, the destruction of Chitor which was "sanctified by the memory of eight centuries of heroic deeds and heart-rending tragedies, wounded deeply the Rajput soul. The place became accursed, and to this day no successor of Udai Singh would dare to set foot within the limits of the once sacred stronghold of his ancestors. The 'sin of the slaughter of Chitor' like the 'curse of Cromwell' in Ireland, has become proverbial, and the memory of it is kept alive, or was so kept a hundred years ago, by a curious custom. It is said that Akbar estimated the total of the Rajput dead by collecting and weighing the 'Brahmanical cords' (*janeo* or *zamar*), which it is the privilege and obligation of high caste men to wear. The recorded amount was 74½ *mans* of about eight pounds each. ['To eternise the memory of this disaster the numerals 74½ are *tīlak* or accursed. Marked on the banker's letter in Rājasthān it is the strongest of seals, for "the sin of the slaughter of Chitor" is thereby invoked on all who violate a letter under the safeguard of this mysterious number.'] The wrath of the conqueror fell upon what Tod calls the 'symbols of regality' as well as the persons of the vanquished. The gates of the fortress were taken off their hinges and removed to Agra. The *nakkaras*, or huge kettle-drums, eight or ten feet in diameter, the reverberations of which had been wont to proclaim 'for miles around the entrance and exit of her princes', as well as the massive candelabra from the shrine of the 'Great Mother,' who had girt Bappa Rawal with the sword by which Chitor was won, were also taken away. . . . The recreant Rāṇa Udai Singh (who had fled to the Aravallis at Akbar's approach, and founded there his new capital of Udaipur) died at Gogunda in the Aravalli hills four years after the storm of the fortress which he should have defended in person. His valiant successor, Rāṇa Pratāp Singh (about whom later), waged a long war with Akbar, and gradually recovered much of Mewar. But Chitor remained desolate."

*Conquest of Gujarat :*

The rich province of Gujarat had been won and lost by Humā-yun, and Akbar could therefore put forth some legitimate claim for its reconquest. "The possession of numerous ports and the resulting extensive maritime commerce made Gujarat the richest kingdom in India. Ahmadābad, the capital, was justly reputed to be one of the finest cities in the world, while the manufacture of salt, cloth, paper, and other commodities flourished in many localities." The confusion into which Gujarat fell soon after the death of Bahādur Shāh has already been hinted at. 'In the Court of the Emperor,' writes Nizām-ud-dīn, 'conversation continually turned upon the state of affairs in Gujarat, and information was often brought about the oppression and wilfulness of its petty rulers, and about the ruin of its towns and cities. Now that His Majesty's mind was quite set at rest by the suppression of rebels, and the reduction of their lofty forts, he turned his attention to the conquest of Gujarat.' In the words of Smith, "The country was at that time without a settled government, being divided into seven warring principalities, over which the nominal King, Muzaffar Shah III, a prince of doubtful legitimacy, exercised little authority. Such a condition of affairs seemed almost to demand the interposition of a power capable of enforcing order. Akbar, in fact, was actually invited by one of the local princelings named Itimad Khan to put an end to the prevailing anarchy."

Akbar marched out from his capital on 4 July 1572 and 'proceeded, enjoying the chase on his way, to Ajmer.' He also visited the tombs of some of the saints, 'and gladdened the hearts of the *sheikhs* and attendants with his munificent gifts.' Then he sent Mirza Muhammad Khān Atka, 'better known by the title of Khān-i-kalan', with 10,000 horse in advance. The Emperor himself marched *via* Nagaur, Mirath, and Sirohi, and sent one of his officers, to make sure of the territory of Jodhpur, and keep the road to Gujarat open, so that none of the Rāṇas might be able to inflict any loss. This duty was imposed upon Rāi Singh Bikāniri, who was sent with a strong force of Imperial troops. *Firmāns* were written to the *amirs* and *jagirdars* of that province, directing them to render Rāi Singh every assistance he might require. . . .

'The Emperor. . . arrived in Pātan, and rested there for a week. The government of the country was conferred upon Saiyid Ahmad

Khān Barha, a man of courage and resolution, who had numerous friends and allies among the Saiyids of Hindustan. At this halt Rājā Mān Singh returned, bringing in a large booty, which he had taken from the remnant of the Afghans. The Emperor then marched towards Ahmedābad. Sher Khān Fulādi had been engaged for six months besieging Ahmedābad, which was held by Itimad Khān ('The slave and prime minister of Sultan Mahmūd Gujarati,' originally a Hindu slave) but when he heard of the Emperor's approach, he took to flight. The Emperor had hardly advanced two stages from Pātan, when Sultan Muzāffar, son of Sultan Mahmūd Gujarati, whom Itimad Khān had kept continually in confinement, came with a great display of respect to meet the Emperor. . . . The next day, Itimad Khān, the ruler of Ahmedābad, . . . and other *amirs* and chiefs of Gujarat, too numerous to mention, came in to wait upon the Emperor, and make their offerings. Itimad Khān presented the keys of Ahmedābad, and showed every sign of submission. The officers of the Court were suspicious of evil designs on the part of the *Habshis* (Abyssinians), and brought the matter to the notice of His Majesty, and although he desired to act generously and royally towards them, as a precaution he committed them to the charge of some of his attendants. The Emperor then marched on, and on Friday, 14th Rajab, pitched his camp on the banks of the river of Ahmedābad (Sābar-mati). The *khutbah* was read in the name of the Emperor, and all the people of the city and environs came to offer congratulations and thanks-givings.

'Ibrāhīm Husain Mirza and Muhammad Husain Mirza held Broach, Baroda, and Surat in defiance of the Emperor. So he resolved to free the country of Gujarat from their rebellious power. On Monday, 2nd Sha'ban, he started from the river of Ahmedābad, and marched towards Cambay. On the 6th the Emperor reached Cambay. He went to look at the sea, and leaving Cambay on the 12th, he reached Baroda on the 14th. After reflecting upon the best means of guarding and governing the country of Gujarat, he appointed Mirza Aziz Muhammad Kokaltash, the *Khān-i-āzam*, to be the governor of the country, and especially of its capital Ahmedābad.' Here it is necessary to note that while at Cambay, for the first time, Akbar received a body of Portuguese merchants who came to pay their respects, and thus made his first acquaintance with the Christians, which event was fraught with great consequences in the future.

'After the departure of Āzam Khān, the Emperor determined upon attacking the fortress of Surat which was the home and stronghold of the Mirzas. To effect this purpose he sent Saiyid Mahmūd Khān Barha, Rāja Bhagwān Dās, Kunwar Mān Singh, and several others to overpower Husain Mirza, who was in Surat.

After a brief fight, Ibrāhim Husain Mirza was disheartened and took to flight. . . . The Emperor went into the town of Sarnal, and offered thanks for his victory. Every man who served in this engagement received his reward in increased rank and in *jagirs*. . . . On Wednesday, the 18th Sha'ban, . . . the Emperor rejoined his camp at Baroda. Next day he conferred a banner and a kettle-drum on Rāja Bhagwān Dās, who had so greatly distinguished himself in this action.

'The fortress of Surat is small, but exceedingly strong and secure, and remarkable among fortresses. It is said that a slave of Sultan Mahmūd Gujarati, who received the title of Khudāwand Khān, built this fortress on the sea-shore (really on the bank of the river Tapi, 20 miles from the sea), in the year 947 H., in order to resist the attacks of the Europeans, for before the fort was built, the Europeans did all kinds of mischief to the Musalmans. When Khudāwand was engaged in the erection of the fort, the Europeans several times fitted out ships to attack it, but could not succeed in their object. . . . On the two sides of the fort which faces the land, he formed ditches reaching to the water, which were 20 yards wide, and filled with water; they were built of stone, *chunam*, and burnt bricks. The thickness of the double walls is five yards, and height twenty yards. . . . It is a remarkable circumstance that each stone is firmly fastened to the next with clamps of iron, having molten lead poured into the interstices. The battlements and embrasures are formed of stone, and are formidable to look at. On the top of the tower there is a *choukhandi* which, in the opinion of Europeans, is an invention of the Portuguese. When the Europeans were unable to prevent the erection of this fortress by force of arms, they offered large sums of money to prevent the raising of this structure. But Khudāwand, in contempt of the Europeans, rejected their application and raised the structure. . . . .

'When the Emperor returned from Sarnal to Baroda, he renewed his design of conquering Surat. . . . The Emperor sent Rāja Todar Mal to examine and ascertain precisely the inlets and outlets of the fortress. After a week he returned and made his report. His Majesty, relying on the help of the Almighty, left Baroda. . . . and encamped at a distance of a *kos* from Surat on the 18th Ramzān. On the same night he went up and reconnoitred the fort. He distributed the batteries among the *amirs*, and three days afterwards he moved his camp, and

pitched his tent so near the fortress that cannon shot and musket balls could reach it. .

'The siege was pressed on, and in a short time the way for drawing water was closed. After it had gone on for two months, the besiegers advanced their batteries, so that every way of ingress and egress was closed. . . . Every hole big enough for a mouse was closed. The miners pushed their mines under the bastions, and made such progress that the capture of the place was a mere matter of to-day or to-morrow. When the garrison perceived the state of affairs, they were reduced to the greatest alarm and distress. The wretched disloyal Ham-zabān and all the people in the fort sent out Maulāna Nizām-ud-dīn Lāri, who was a student and an eloquent man, to sue for quarter. . . . His Majesty, in his gentleness and humanity, granted the petition. . . . Lāri returned to the fortress with the glad news of quarter having been conceded. . . . In gratitude for the victory, the Emperor pardoned the common people and inhabitants of the place, but Ham-zabān and some others, who were the instigators of all the strife, were punished and kept in custody.' This conquest was effected on 26 February 1573.

'While the Emperor was engaged in the siege of Surat several events occurred. Among them was the journey of Ibrāhīm Husain Mirza to Hindustan, for the purpose of raising disturbances. After his defeat at Sarnal, Ibrāhīm fled to the neighbourhood of Pātan, where he joined Muhammad Husain Mirza and Shāh Mirza and informed them of his escape, and of the siege of Surat. After consultation it was resolved that Ibrāhīm should go into Hindustan and create disturbances, while the other two Mirzas laid siege to Pātan; their expectation being that the Emperor, on receiving intelligence of these proceedings, would abandon the siege of Surat, and fall back upon Ahmedābad, to repress these two outbreaks. . . . They invested Pātan. Saiyad Ahmad Khān Barha (the governor) put the fort in order, and shut himself up. He sent an account of the investment to the Emperor, who, on hearing it, issued orders. . . . to repress this rebellious attempt. The nobles accordingly joined Azam Khān and marched to Pātan. . . . The Mirzas fell upon the advance and defeated it. . . . When Azam Khān saw the defeat of his right and left, and the fall of Muhammad Bukhāri, he resolved to make a bold attempt to retrieve matters, and to dash into the fight. . . . When the enemy's men dispersed in search of plunder, and there remained but a few, Azam Khān. . . . formed his ranks and fell upon the enemy's centre. By God's help, victory declared in their favour, and the foe was scattered on every side. . . . Muhammad Husain Mirza fled to the Dakhin. This victory was won on the 18th Ramzān, '980'.

In March 1573, 'the Emperor arrived at Ahmedābad and there he entrusted the government of Gujarat to Khān-i-āzam (Mirza Koka). On the 10th Zi-l-hijja, the *Id-zuha*, he commenced his journey to the capital. On his way Muzāffar Khān (late King of Gujarat) received the Imperial bounty : The *sarkars* of Sāranpur and Ujjain in Mālwa were taken from the Rāṇa and granted to him, with fifty lacs of tankās in jagir....

*Rebellion in Gujarat* : 'When the Emperor returned from Gujarat, there remained no resistance in that country, all the forts were in the hands of his servants, and such of his troops as had not served on the campaigns were sent to strengthen Āzam Khān. But he had hardly been six months in his capital, when news of fresh outbreaks came in time after time, and Āzam Khān himself wrote for reinforcements. The Emperor therefore resolved once more to raise his banner in Gujarat, to clear the country of the rebels, and to uproot their families.....In the early morning of Sunday, 24th Rabi' u-l-akhir 981, the Emperor with his companions and attendants, mounted swift she-camels and took their departure. On that day he rode to the town of Toda (about 70 miles W. by S. from Agra) without drawing rein. There he ate what he could get, and rode on.....On Tuesday, he reached the tomb of Chishti at Ajmer (140 *kos* ; "228 miles"—Thornton), where he went through the usual observances and bestowed his gifts upon the poor....Although the horsemen under his colours were only 3000 in number, and the enemy had more than 20,000, he put his trust in God, and in the latter part of the day marched from Bhilsān towards Ahmedābad. A messenger was sent to apprise Khān-i-āzam of his approach. He marched all night, and on Tuesday, 3rd Jumada awwal, he reached Kari, a town 20 *kos* from Ahmedābad. Thus, in nine days, the Emperor marched from Fathpur to the outskirts of Ahmedābad, a feat which it is difficult for the pen to describe.'

*Final settlement of Gujarat* : After a sharp action the back of the rebellion in Gujarat was broken. Having accomplished this, Akbar appointed Kutb-ud-dīn Muhammad Khān and Naurang Khān to Broach and Champaner, to uproot the power of Shāh Mirza, who was the only Mirza yet remaining to be subdued. Rāja Bhagwān Dās, Shāh Kuli Mahram, and several others were sent to Idar, to ravage the country which Rāṇa Udai Singh had abandoned. The government of Pātan was again confided to Khān-i-kalan. Khwāja

Ghiyās-ud-dīn Ali Bakshi, who had rendered good service in this campaign, received the title of Asaf Khān (II), and he was appointed *diwān* and *bakshi* of Gujarat. So he remained behind with Khān-i-āzam, who was entrusted with the full charge of the province as before. The Emperor left Ahmedābad on Sunday, 16th Jumada-I-awwal; "he was back in Fathpur-Sikri within forty-three days from the time he had ridden out. Considering the distance travelled, *Akbar's second Gujarat expedition may be described safely as the quickest campaign on record.* The victor, spear in hand, rode proudly into his capital, on Monday, October 5, 1573."

'The revenues of Gujarat had not been paid up satisfactorily,' says Nizām-ud-dīn; 'so the Rāja (Todar Mal) was sent to ascertain and settle the assets, and draw up an account of them for the royal exchequer.' This capable officer, about whom we shall learn more later, "effected the measurement of the greater part of the lands in the short space of six months. The province, as reorganised yielded more than five millions of rupees annually to the Emperor's private treasury, after the expenses of the administration had been defrayed. The work so well begun by Rāja Todar Mal was continued by another revenue expert, Shihāb-ud-dīn Ahmad Khān, who was viceroy from 1577 to 1583 or 1584. He rearranged the *sarkars* or administrative districts, so that sixteen were included in the province. The conquest of 1573 was final, although disturbances continued to occur. Gujarat remained under the government of the Imperial viceroys until 1758, when Ahmadabad was definitely taken by the Mahrattas ..... *Akbar's system of administration may be said to have been definitely planned in 1573 and 1574, immediately after the conquest of Gujarat.*" (Smith, *Akbar*.)

#### *Conquest of Bihar and Bengal :*

Bihar and Bengāl had been overrun by the Mughals, but not wholly subdued. Humāyun had occupied Gaur, the capital of Bengal, for a short time, but he was immediately driven out by the Afghans. The Sūrs had established their sovereignty up to the borders of Assam. 'Suleimān Kirāni, one of the *amirs* of Salim Shāh, and ruler of Bengal and Bihar, who had always in his letters acknowledged himself a vassal of the Imperial throne, died while the Emperor was engaged in his Surat campaign, in the year 981 H. His eldest son Bāyazid succeeded, but he was murdered by the *amirs* and the

younger son raised to the throne. 'The Emperor was informed that Dāud the Afghan chief had stepped out of his proper sphere, and assumed the title of King, and had destroyed the fort of Patna. A *firmān* was immediately sent to Khān-khānan, directing him to chastise Dāud, and to conquer the country of Bihar.

'At that time Dāud was at Hājipur, and his chief noble, Lodi, who was in open hostility to him, was in the fort of Rohtas, and set up a claim to independence. Khān-khānan Munim Khān marched with the Imperial forces against Patna and Hājipur. Lodi, knowing the destruction of the Afghans to be certain, notwithstanding his hostility towards Dāud, made a sort of peace with Khān-khānan. The old friendship and respect which Khān-khānan had for the late Suleimān Kirāni led him to agree that, upon the payment of two *lacs* of *rupees* in money and one *lac* in stuffs as a tribute, the Imperial forces should be withdrawn. Then having sent Jalāl Khān Krori, he entered into a peace with Dāud. But Dāud was a dissolute scamp, and knew nothing of the business of governing. At the instigation of Katlu Khān and Sridhar Hindu Bengali, and through his own want of judgment, he seized Lodi, (prime minister), and put him in confinement under the charge of Sridhar Bengali. When in prison, Lodi sent for Katlu and Sridhar, and sent Dāud this message: "If you consider my death to be for the welfare of the country, put your mind quickly at ease about it; but you will be very sorry for it after I am dead. You have never given me any good wishes or advice, but still I am willing to advise you. Act upon my counsel, for it will be for your good: After I am killed, fight the Mughals without hesitation, that you may gain the victory. If You do not do so, the Mughals will attack you, and you will not be able to help yourself. Do not be too sure about the peace with the Mughals, they are only biding their time." But the power of Dāud and of all the Afghans was on the wane: it was God's will that they should fall, and that the power of the Emperor should be established over the country of Bengal. So Dāud resolved to put Lodi out of the way, and by so doing to establish his authority to his satisfaction....So, in the pride and intoxication of youth, he listened to the words of his sinister counsellors. The doomed victim was put to death, and Dāud became the master of his elephants, his treasure and his troops. But he was puffed up with conceit and folly, and took no precautions for combating his enemies, and relying upon that unsatisfactory peace which Lodi had concluded, he banished all care.

'When the death of Lodi was reported to Khān-khānan, he at once set his heart upon the conquest of Bengal and Lakhnauti and marched against Patna and Hājipur...The Emperor, when he heard of this, determined personally to direct the operations. After resting for a few days at Fathpur, he sent off his camp and elephants by land, under the command of Mirza Yusuf Khān Rizwi, one of his chief *amirs*. He placed Agra in charge of Shāhbu-d dīn



Ahmad Khān Naishāpuri, and embarked on board a boat on Sunday, the last day of Safar 982 H. (15 June 1574). The boats carried all equipments and establishments, armour, drums, treasure, carpets, kitchen-utensils, stud, etc. Two large boats were specially prepared for his own accommodation, in which he embarked with his attendants. The boats required by the *amirs* for themselves and their establishments were in the rear of the royal boats. . . . Every day he left the boat and went hunting on shore ('In the evening they cast anchor, and the Emperor engaged in discussions upon science, and poetry, etc.,—Badāuni, ii, p. 176). Every day he was joined by fresh parties of troops. . . . On the 28th he reached Kori, a dependency of Jaunpur, at the confluence of the Gumti and Ganges, and there anchored. Here he was waited upon by Mirza Yusuf Khān, who had brought down the army by land.

Khān-khānan and the other *amirs* advanced *two kos* from Patna to meet the Emperor, who on the 16th reached his destination, and took up his residence in the tents of Khān-khānan. Great rejoicings followed, and rich offerings were made. On the 17th Akbar held a council of war. . . . He thought that the best course to follow was to first reduce the fort of Hājipur which stood opposite Patna, with the Ganges, about two *kos* in width, flowing between them, which rendered very material assistance to the garrison of Patna. The Khāns greatly applauded this scheme. . . . Victory soon declared in favour of the Emperor. Fath Khān Barha, commander of Hājipur, and many Afghans were slain, and the place fell into the hands of the Mughals. The head of Fath Khān Barha and the heads of other Afghans were thrown into boats, and sent to Dāūd, that he might see with his own eyes what had befallen his officers, and might be led to reflect upon his own position. When Dāūd's eyes fell upon these heads, he was plunged into dismay, and set mind upon flight. Late at night, when the flight of Dāūd was reported, the Emperor gave thanks to heaven, and as soon as it was light, Khān-khānan having assured himself of the fact, the royal forces entered the city with great display. Fifty-six elephants, which the enemy had been unable to carry off, were found in the city. The date of the fall of Patna, which was indeed the conquest of Bengal, is found in this line, "*Mulki-i Suleimān zi Dāūd raft*" (983).

Smith here reflects, "The capture of so great a city in the middle of the rainy season was an almost unprecedented achievement and a painful surprise to the Bengal prince. He had reckoned on Akbar following the good old Indian custom of waiting until the Dasara festival in October to begin a campaign. But Akbar resembled his prototype, Alexander of Macedon, in his complete disregard of adverse weather conditions, and so was able to win victories in defiance of the *shastras* and the seasons."

*Capture of Garhi and Tanda* : 'The Emperor remained in the city till four hours of the day had passed, and having made a proclamation of amnesty to the inhabitants, he left Khān-khānān in command of the army, while he himself dashed off in pursuit of Gujar Khān (Dāūd's minister) . . . . When he reached the Punpun (river near Patna), he swam over on horseback, and the *amirs* and soldiers followed his example. Then he gave orders for every man and officer to press on with all his might in the pursuit of the enemy, and he himself spurred forward. . . . . The Emperor stayed at Daryāpur six days. He appointed Khān-khānān to the government of Bengal, and left him an additional force of 20,000 horse. He increased his military allowance by 25 to 30 per cent., he gave him all the boats which he had brought down from Agra, and invested him with full power and authority. Then he raised the standard of return, and dismissed Khān-khānān and other *amirs*. . . . .

'The Emperor remained at Jaunpur thirty-three days, devoting his time to making arrangements for the army and the government of the country. He placed Jaunpur, Benares, the fort of Chunar, and sundry other *mahals* and *parganas* directly under the royal exchequer, and he gave the management of them to Mirza Mirak Rizwi and Sheikh Ibrāhīm Sikr.

'When Dāūd fled from Patna, he went to Garhi. Leaving some trusty men there, he proceeded to the town of Tanda. He made such efforts to strengthen the fort of Garhi that in his vain idea it was impregnable. Khān-khānān marched against Tanda, and arrived near Garhi. (He had already made himself master of Surājgarh, Mongir, and Bhagalpur, *Akbar-Nāmā*, ii, p. 84). As soon as the eyes of the terrified Afghans fell upon his army, they fled and abandoned the fort, so that he obtained possession of Garhi without striking a blow. This intelligence greatly pleased the Emperor, and he sent letters of commendation to Khān-khānān and

the other *amirs*. Continuing his journey, and hunting as he went, he arrived, on the 8th Jumada-s sani, at the town of Iskandarpur, where he received the intelligence of the fall of Tanda. After taking possession of the fort of Garhi, the Imperial forces marched on towards Tanda, which is the capital of the kingdom of Bengal. Khān-khānān's explorers at first reported that Dāūd intended to make a stand there, and had made his dispositions. Khān-khānān thereupon summoned his *amirs*, and took every precaution for the security of his army. Next day he marshalled his forces and advanced upon Tanda. When Dāūd's spies carried him the intelligence of Khān-khānān's advance, he and his associates thought of the black night of Patna, and fled in dismay, abandoning the town. Thus on the 4th Jumada-s sani, the capital of Tanda was won for the Emperor without fighting, and a proclamation of protection was issued to the people..... The Emperor arrived at Fathpur on the last day of Ramzān (18 January 1575, after seven months of strenuous travelling and campaigning).

*Dāūd's defeat at Tukaroi* : After the conquest of Tanda and the flight of Dāūd, Khān-khānān sent Rāja Todar Mal with some other *amirs* towards Orissa, in pursuit of Dāūd.... Rāja Todar Mal reached Madaran (in the Hugli District, between Burdwan and Midnapur), was informed by his scouts that Dāūd was engaged collecting men in Din-kasari, and that his forces were daily increasing.' Todar Mal informed Khān-khānān of this and got reinforcements. 'Upon their arrival all the chiefs concurred in the expediency of marching to Gawalpara, ten *kos* from Din-kasari, with all speed. When Dāūd heard this, he did not fly, but stood his ground at Dhārpur..... Rāja Todar Mal halted and sent swift messengers to inform Khān-khānān of the position of affairs. Khān-khānān then left Tanda to march against Dāūd and organized his army and now advanced to meet him. The Afghans entrenched their camp. On the 20th Zi-l kadda 982, the armies met (3 March, 1575) at Tukaroi, now in the Balasore District (between Midnapur and Jalesar). After the array was formed, the Afghans advanced rapidly and boldly to the attack. Khān-khānān ordered fire to open upon them from the swivels (*sarb-zam*) and light guns (*zandurak*) which were mounted on *arabas* in front of his line. The fire of the guns drove back the elephants which were placed in front of the Afghan attack, and the musketry mowed down the Afghans who were in the advance..... An arrow struck Gujar Khān (Dāūd's general) and brought him down. The Afghans saw their leader fall, they turned their backs and fled; but many of them were cut down in the flight..... The death of Gujar Khān came to the knowledge of Dāūd. This shook his resolution, and he turned

and fled. Immense booty fell into the hands of the victors, and Khān-khānān encamped victorious on the battle-field. He remained there a few days, and sent a report of the victory to the Emperor. All the prisoners taken were put to the sword.'

*Peace with Dāud* : Dāud fled to Cuttack, in Orissa, but was pursued by Rāja Todar Mal and others. 'Dāud had suffered several defeats in succession, and Gujar Khān, his mainstay and support, was slain. Death stared him in the face; in his despair and misery, he sent a messenger to Khān-khānān with this message: "Striving to crush a party of Musalmans is no noble work. I am ready to submit and become a subject; but I beg that a corner of this wide country of Bengal, sufficient for my support, may be assigned to me. If this is granted, I will rest content, and never after rebel." The *amirs* communicated this to Khān-khānān, and after considerable discussion, it was determined to accept the proposal, upon the condition that Dāud himself should come out to meet Khān-khānān, and confirm the agreement by solemn binding oaths. (The Rāja Todar Mal, who well understood the position of affairs, though he wrung his hands and stamped his feet, to prevent the armistice, met with no support. He refused to take any part in the settlement.

'Dāud protested that he would never take any course hostile to the Imperial throne and he confirmed his promise by the most stringent oaths. The treaty of peace was drawn up, and then Khān-khānān brought a sword with a jewelled belt of great value, and presenting it to Dāud, said, "You have now become a subject of the Imperial throne, and have promised to give your support. I have therefore requested that the country of Orissa may be settled upon you for your support, and I feel assured that His Majesty will confirm my proposition—granting this to you. I now gird you afresh with this warlike sword." Then he bound on the sword with his own hands; and showing him every courtesy, and making him a great variety of gifts, he dismissed him. The Court then broke up, and Khān-khānān started on his return. On the 10 Safar 983, he sent a report of his arrangements to the Emperor, who was greatly delighted and satisfied with the conquest of Bengal. Splendid robes and jewelled swords, and a horse with golden saddle, were sent to Khān-khānān, and all the arrangements he had made were confirmed.

'When the despatch reached His Majesty, he appointed Khān-jahān, who had been supreme governor of the Punjab, to be governor of Bengal. He raised him to the dignity of *amir-i umara*, commended the *raiya*s and the people to his care, bestowed upon him gifts of embroidered coats, jewelled swords, and richly caparisoned horses, and dismissed him to his government.

'While the Emperor was encamped at Ajmer, the intelligence was brought to him that Dāud Afghan had flung away the treaty which he had made with Khān-khānān, had risen against the royal

authority, and had marched against Tanda. The Imperial forces in that quarter, having no chief among them on whom they could rely, had abandoned the country, and retired to Hājipur and Patna. All this commotion had arisen because Khān-jahān had taken time in going there, in consequence of his army being at Lahore. . . . The Khān took the field, and advanced into Bengal. He had an action with 3000 men whom Dāud had left in charge of Garhi, and took the place. Nearly 1500 of the enemy were slain, and many chiefs were made prisoners.'

On 22 July 1576, when Akbar was at Fathpur, 'messengers arrived with the intelligence that Khān-jahān, after the capture of Garhi, had advanced to the vicinity of Tanda. There he found that Dāud had evacuated Tanda, and had taken position in the village of Ak. On one side was a river, on the other a mountain, and he had thrown up entrenchments to secure his position. Khān-jahān marched against him, and sharp fighting followed. One day Khwāja Abdulla, one of the Imperial officers, advanced from his battery to the edge of the Afghan entrenchment. The enemy sallied forth and attacked him, and he fell, fighting bravely. On hearing of his fall the Emperor's anger was aroused, and he sent an order to Muzāffar Khān, the governor of Patna and Bihar, to assemble all the troops in his province, and march to the assistance of Khān-jahān. . . . . He sent by *dāk-chauki* five lacs of rupees towards defraying the expenses of the army. Orders were given for the despatch of boats laden with grain from Agra, for the use of the army . . . . The Emperor himself set off from Fathpur, but at five *kos* distance he made a halt, and issued orders for the assembling of troops, and for the preparation of boats and artillery. Here he was waited upon by Abdulla Khān whom he had sent as a messenger to Khān-jahān, and who now returned to cast the head of Dāud at the foot of the Emperor's throne. Rejoiced at the victory he returned to the capital.'

The *Tarik-i Dāudi* closes with the following observations:— 'Dāud Shāh Kirāni was brought in a prisoner, his horse having fallen with him. Khān-jahān, seeing Dāud in this condition, asked him if he called himself a Musalman, and why he had broken the oaths which he had taken on the *Koran* and before God. Dāud answered that he had made the peace with Munim Khān personally; and that if he had now gained the victory, he would have been ready to renew it. Khān-jahān ordered them to relieve his body from the weight of his head, which he sent to Akbar the King. . . . . *From that period the dominion*

*of Hindustan departed from the tribe of Afghans, and their dynasty was extinguished for ever, in lieu of which arose the star of Akbar Shāh's supremacy over the whole country.'*

"The independent kingdom of Bengal, which had lasted for about two hundred and thirty-six years (1340-1576)," writes Smith, "perished along with Dāud, 'the dissolute scamp, who knew nothing of the business of governing.'"

#### *Rāṇa Pratāp's Glorious Resistance :*

We have noted already how Akbar's conquest of Rajputāna was almost complete but for the flight of Rāṇa Udai Singh of Mewar, who sought refuge in the Aravallis where he founded his new capital of Udaipur. 'Four years had Udai Singh survived the loss of Chitore,' writes Tod, 'when he expired at Gogunda, at the early age of forty-two, yet far too long for his country's honour and welfare.' "Pratap succeeded to the titles and renown of an illustrious house, but without a capital, without resources, his kindred and clan dispirited by reverses ; yet possessed of the noble spirit of his race, he meditated the recovery of Chitore, the vindication of the honour of his house, and the restoration of its power. Elevated with this design, he hurried into conflict with his powerful antagonist (Akbar), nor stooped to calculate the means which were opposed to him\* . . . . . The wily Mughal arrayed against Pratap his kindred in faith as well as blood. The princes of Marwar, Amber, Bikanir, and even, Bundi, took part with Akbar and upheld despotism. Nay, even his own brother Sagorji, deserted him, and received, as the price of his treachery, the ancient capital of his race, and the title which that possession conferred.

"But the magnitude of the peril confirmed the fortitude of Pratāp, who vowed, in the words of the bard, 'to make his mother's milk resplendent'; and he amply redeemed his pledge. Single-handed, for a quarter of a century did he withstand the combined efforts of the Empire ; at one time carrying destruction into the plains, at another flying from rock to rock, feeding his family from the fruits

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\* "The empire of Akbar during the last quarter of the 16th century," says Smith, "was the most powerful in the world, and its sovereign was immeasurably the richest monarch on the face of the earth. . . . Even in 1776 the amount of his horded riches must have been stupendous, and none but the bravest of the brave could have dared to match the chivalry of poverty-stricken Mewar against the glittering host of rich Hindustan."

of his native hills, and rearing the nursling Amar (his son), amidst savage beasts and scarce less savage men, a fit heir to his prowess and revenge. The bare idea that 'the son of Bappa Rawal should bow the head to mortal man,' was insupportable; and he spurned every overture which had submission for its basis, or the degradation of uniting his family by marriage with the Tartar, though lord of countless multitudes.

"The brilliant acts he achieved during that period (1572-97) live in every valley; they are enshrined in the heart of every Rajput, and many are recorded in the annals of the conquerors. To recount them all, or relate the hardships he sustained, would be to pen what they would pronounce a romance who had not traversed the country where tradition is yet eloquent with his exploits, or conversed with the descendants of his chiefs, who cherish a recollection of the deeds of their forefathers, and melt, as they recite them, into manly tears. . . . . To commemorate the desolation of Chitore, which the bardic historian represents as a 'widow despoiled of the ornaments of her loveliness,' Pratāp interdicted to himself and his successors every article of luxury and pomp until the insignia of her glory should be redeemed\* . . . . . with the aid of some chiefs of judgment and experience, Pratāp remodelled his government, adapting it to the exigencies of the times and to his slender resources. New grants were issued, with regulations defining the service required. Kumbalgarh (or Kumbhalgarh, situated on a mountain, near the western border of Mewar, about 40 miles to the north of Udaipur city), now the seat of government, was strengthened as well as Gogunda and other mountain fortresses; and being unable to keep the field in the plains of Mewar, he followed the system of his ancestors, and commanded his subjects, on pain of death, to retire into the mountains. During the protracted contest, the fertile tracts watered by the Bunas and the Beris, from the

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\* "The gold and silver dishes were laid aside for *patras* or leaves, their beds henceforth of straw, and their beards left untouched. But in order distinctly to mark their fallen fortune and stimulate to its recovery, he commanded that the martial *nakas*, which always sounded in the van of battle or processions, should follow in the rear. This last sign of the depression of Mewar still survives; the beard is yet untouched by the shears; and even in the subterfuge by which the patriot king's behest is set aside, we have a tribute to his memory: for though his descendant eats off gold and silver and sleeps upon a bed, he places the leaves beneath the one and straw under the other."—Tod, i, p. 347.

Aravalli chain west, to the eastern table-land, was 'be *chiragh*', without a lamp. . . . ."

*Battle of Haldighāt or Gogunda* : Nizām-ud-din, whose account we have mostly followed for other events of Akbar's reign, gives only a very brief description of this glorious fight for independence : 'Rāṇa Kika (as he calls Rāṇa Pratāp) was chief among the Rājas of Hindustan. After the conquest of Chitore, he built a town called Kokanda (Gogunda), with fine houses and gardens, in the mountains of Hinduwāra. There he passed his days in rebellion. When Kunwar Mān Singh drew near to Kokanda, Rāṇa Kika called all the Rājas of Hindustan to his aid, and came out of Ghāti Haldeo (Haldighāt) with a strong force to oppose his assailant. Kunwar Mān Singh, in agreement with his *amirs*, put his troops in array and marched to the battle-field. Some desperate charges were made on both sides, and the battle waged for a watch with great slaughter.\* The Rajputs in both armies fought fiercely in emulation of each other.' Nearly 150 horse-men of the royal army were killed, and more than 500 Rajputs of the enemy's army were sent to perdition. The enemy lost Rāmeshwar Gwaliari and his son, and the son of Jai Mal. On that day Rāṇa Kika fought obstinately till he received wounds from an arrow and from a spear ; he then turned to save his life, and left the field of battle. The Imperial forces pursued the Rajputs, and killed numbers of them. Kunwar Mān Singh wrote an account of the victory to the Emperor. Next day he went through the pass of Haldeo, and entered Kokanda. He took up his abode in the house of Rāṇa Kika, and again returned thanks to the Almighty. Rāṇa Kika fled into the hills for refuge. The Emperor rewarded Kunwar Mān Singh and his *amirs* with robes and horses.'

"On the 7th of Sawun, s. 1632 (July, 1576 A.D.), a day ever memorable in her annals, the best blood of Mewar irrigated the pass of Haldighat." Pratāp retired to the remote fastness of Chaund, and his strong fortresses fell one by one into the enemy's hands. "But later he recovered all Mewar, excepting Chitor, Ajmer, and Mandalgarh. During the latter years of his life he was left in peace, owing to the inability of Akbar to continue an active campaign in Rajputāna,

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\* The historian Badāuni had enthusiastically joined this campaign, because, as he put it, "I have a presumption to desire to dye these black mustachios and beard in blood through loyalty to your Majesty's person." He said to Asaf Khān, the chief under whom he fought, "How are we in these circumstances, since there are Rajputs on either side, to distinguish between friendly and hostile Rajputs?" He answered, "Oh whichever side these may be killed, it will be a gain to Islam." He records with great satisfaction : "My hand prospered in the matter, and I attained the reward due to one who fights against infidels. . . ;" and that day through the generalship of Mān Singh, the meaning of this line of Mulla Shir became known :—"A Hindu strikes, but the sword is Islam's."



while necessity compelled him to reside for thirteen years in the Punjab. In 1597 Pratāp died, worn out in body and mind. His chiefs pledged themselves to see that his son Amar Singh should not forget his duty."

'The last moments of Pratāp,' writes Tod, 'were an appropriate commentary on his life, which he terminated, like the Carthaginian, swearing his successor to eternal conflict against the foes of his country's independence. . . . *Thus closed the life of a Rajput whose memory is even now idolized by every Sisodia and will continue to be so till renewed oppression shall extinguish the remaining sparks of patriotic feeling. May that day never arrive! yet if such be her destiny, may it, at least, not be hastened by the arms of Britain.*' He also adds, 'There is not a pass in the alpine Aravalli that is not sanctified by some deed of Pratāp,—some brilliant victory, or oftener, more glorious defeat. Haldighāt is the Thermopylae of Mewar; the field of Dewir her Marathon.'

The end of the struggle with the Rajputs is thus briefly described by Dr. Ishwari Prasad: "Rana Pratap was succeeded by his son Amar Singh in 1597. He reorganised the institutions of the state, made a fresh assessment of the lands, and regulated the conditions of military service. The Mughals took the offensive again, and in 1599 Akbar sent Prince Salim and Raja Man Singh to invade Mewar. The Prince frittered away his time in the pursuit of pleasure at Ajmer, but the valiant Raja aided by other officers did a great deal. Amar led the attack, but he was defeated, and his country was devastated by the imperialists. The campaign came to an end abruptly, when Raja Man Singh was called away by the Emperor in order to quell the revolt of Usman Khan in Bengal. Akbar contemplated another invasion of Mewar, but his illness prevented him from putting his plan into execution."

#### *The Crisis of 1581 :*

"The year 1581," observes Smith, "may be regarded as the most critical time in the reign of Akbar, if his early struggles to consolidate his power be not taken into account." When the year began he was undisputed master of all the fortresses in northern India, and had extended his dominion east and west from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal, and southwards as far as the Tapti river. But he was faced with rebellions on all sides, which had arisen from com-

plex causes. In addition to the unquenchable discontent among the Afghans whose power he had supplanted, Akbar's religious and other reforms, which we shall notice later, had created a great ferment among the more-conservative sections of his subjects. At the same time, Akbar's restless brother, Muhammad Hākīm, was ever watchful for an opportunity to fish in troubled waters. At this time rebellions arose, almost simultaneously, in Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, and in the north-west. We shall notice these one by one.

*Bengal and Bihar* : We have noted already that, after the death of Munim Khān, Khān-jahān was appointed governor of Bengal. He too died in December 1578, and was succeeded by Muzāffar Khān Turbati, in March 1579. Nizām-ud-dīn records, 'Muzāffar Khān, on arriving in Bengal, set about arranging the affairs of that province. But his prosperity was on the wane, and his day was gone by. He was harsh in his measures, he offended men with his words, he deprived many *amirs* of their *jagirs*, he demanded the *dagh* (brand-tax), and brought old practices up again. Bābā Khān Kakshal, although he was conciliatory, and begged that his *jagir* might be left undisturbed, was called upon for the *dagh*, and received no attention. The *pargana* of Jalesar, which was the *jagir* of Khaldi Khān, was taken away from him at the beginning of the spring harvest, and was added as *tankhwaṭ* to the *jagir* of Shāh Jamāl-ud-dīn Husain. A sum of money due from the spring harvest had been received by Khaldi Khān, and to recover this Muzāffar Khān put him in prison, and ordered him to be scourged and bastinadoed.

'At this time a *firmān* also arrived from the Imperial Court, directing Muzāffar Khān to apprehend and put to death a servant of Mirza Muhammad Hākīm, named Roshan Beg, who had left Kabul and gone into Bengal, and to send his head to Court. This Roshan Beg was among the Kakshals, and Muzāffar Khān issued an order for his execution. He also spake some harsh words about Bābā Khān Kakshal. The soldiers who were present, and especially Bābā Khān and the Kakshals, trembled together and resolved upon mutiny. They shaved their heads, put on their high caps, and broke out into revolt. When the disaffection of the Kakshals was reported to the Emperor, he sent a *firmān* to Muzāffar Khān, in which he said that the Kakshals had long been servants of the throne, and it was not right to hurt them; and they were therefore to be conciliated and encouraged with hopes of the Emperor's favour, and the matter of their *jagirs* was to be settled. The *firmān* arrived at the time when Muzāffar Khān was in face of the insurgents. Upon the arrival of the *firmān*, Bābā Khān and the other rebels made a show of submission, and sent a message to Muzāffar Khān, asking him to send Rizwī Khān and Patar Dās to arrange terms with them....But, when they arrived, Bābā Khān put them in confinement, and so stirred the fire of warfare.

'Coincident with this, it so happened that Mulla Tayib, Purshot-

tam *Bakshi*, and the revenue officials of Bihar, also entered upon harsh dealings. They took away the *jagirs* of Muhammad Masum Kābuli, Arab Bahādur, and all the *amirs*, and so laid the foundation of an evil system. Masum Kābuli and the others resolved to rebel, and kill Mulla Tayib and Rai Purshottam. Having put them to flight, they plundered their dwellings. After a few days, Purshottam rallied some loyal subjects, and crossed the river Jausa with the intention of attacking the rebels. But the rebel Arab Bahādur anticipated him, took him unawares, and killed him.

‘Upon the intelligence of Masum’s rebellion reaching Bāba Khān, a correspondence was opened between them, and when the Kakshals confronted Muzāffar Khān, Masum marched to assist them, and arrived at Garhi. . . and the revolt gathered strength. The Kakshals then crossed the river, and advanced against Muzāffar Khān. . . . Muzāffar Khān then took shelter in the fort of Tanda, which was nothing better than four walls. The rebels occupied the town of Tanda. They took Hākīm Abul Fath, Khwāja Shams-ud-din and others prisoners, and began to pillage. . . . The rebels made themselves masters of the fort of Tanda, brought Muzāffar Khān out of his house upon a solemn assurance of safety and put him to death. They took possession of his property and effects, and all the country of Bengal and Bihar fell into their hands. Nearly 30,000 horsemen assembled round the rebels. The Emperor some time before this had taken Mirza Sharāf-ud-din Husain out of prison, and sent him to Bengal to Muzāffar Khān (to be kept in custody). The rebels now released him from confinement, and placed him at their head. So the revolt increased.

‘Upon the facts being communicated to the Emperor, he sent Rāja Todar Mal. . . and other *amirs* to repress it. *Firmāns* were sent to Muhammad Masum Farankhudi, governor of Jaunpur, and. . . the *jagirdars* of that country, directing them to place themselves under the command of Todar Mal, and render every assistance to quash the rebellion. When the Imperial army reached Mongir, the Khakshals, and Mirza Sharāf-ud-din Husain with 30,000 horse, 5,000 elephants, and war-boats and artillery, in battle array, advanced to meet the Imperial army. Rāja Todar Mal had no confidence in the cohesion of the adventurers composing the enemy’s army, and deeming it inexpedient to fight, he occupied the fort of Mongir, and throwing up other fortifications around it, he kept that position. For four months the royal forces and the insurgents faced each other, but at length some loyal *zamindars* of the vicinity cut off the supplies from the insurgents, and great scarcity prevailed among them. Bābā Khān Kakshal fell sick and died. . . . Masum, not being able to maintain his

ground, withdrew to Bihar. Arab Bahādur made rapid march to Patna, seized upon the city, and appropriated the treasure, but he was soon put to flight... Todar Mal and the other *amirs* marched to Bihar,... and the Emperor's good fortune aided them, and Masum ran away to Bengal in sorry flight. Now Garhi fell into the hands of the royal troops.' After this, though fighting continued for a considerable length of time in the eastern provinces, the back of the rebellion was broken, and Bengal and Bihar were restored to Imperial allegiance.

Akbar appointed his foster-brother, Mirza Aziz Kokah, governor of Bengal, under the title of *Khān-i-āzam*, and entrusted him with the task of further pacifying the eastern provinces. In order to conciliate the rebels, Shāh Mansur, the Diwān or Finance Minister, who had been responsible for drastic measures (like cutting down the allowances of soldiers by 50 and 20 per cent.) was temporarily removed from office. "Mulla Muhammad Yazdi, the Kāzi of Jaunpur, who had dared to give the ruling, that rebellion (against an innovating ruler) was lawful, was sent for, along with his colleague, the Kāzi of Bengal. Their boat 'foundered' in the river, and sundry other Mullas suspected of disaffection were 'sent to the closet of annihilation,' by one way or another (Badāuni, ii, p. 285.)... Akbar exhibited his usual politic clemency in favour of several of the prominent rebel leaders, who sometimes abused his leniency and renewed their disloyal conduct.'

*Mirza Hākīm's Rebellion* : Akbar did not personally undertake the subjugation of the eastern rebels, because there was a more serious danger threatening from the north-west. His cousin, Mirza Muhammad Hākīm, was once more preparing for an invasion in collusion with the Bengal insurgents. "A successful invasion from Kabul," as Smith has pointed out, "resulting in the occupation of Delhi and Agra, with its enormous store of treasure, would have meant the destruction of the empire which Akbar had built up with so much labour and skill. But if that invasion should fail, the rising in the east might be safely regarded as a mere provincial trouble to be adjusted sooner or later by the imperial officers. Events proved the soundness of Akbar's judgment. The invasion from the north-west was repelled, and the eastern insurrections were suppressed in due course." Nizām-ud-dīn's account of this north-western campaign is as follows :—

'In the beginning of this year (989 H. or 1581 A.D.) intelligence arrived that Mirza Muhammad Hākīm, allured by the inducements held out in letters sent to him by Masum Kābuli and Masum Farankhudi, and urged on by his maternal uncle Faridun, had set out from Kabul with the object of conquering Hindustan. He sent his servant Shadman over the Indus (in advance), but Kunwar Mān Singh, son of Rāja Bhagwān Dās, attacked him and killed him. On hearing of this, the Mirza crossed the river, and encamped in the *pargana* of Saiyidpur. The Emperor assembled his forces, and having advanced to all the soldiers eight months' pay out of the treasury, he marched towards the Punjab....

'When Kunwar Mān Singh defeated Shadman, he obtained from Shadman's portfolio three letters from Mirza Muhammad Hākīm, one to Hākīm-ul-Mulk, one to Khwāja Shāh Mansūr (Akbar's trusted *Diwān*) and one to Muhammad Kāsim Khān *Mir-bahr*; all in answer to letters of invitation and encouragement. Kunwar Mān Singh sent these letters to the Emperor, who ascertained the contents, but kept the fact concealed.

'After the Emperor marched from Delhi, Mirza Muhammad Hākīm advanced to Lahore, and encamped in the garden of Mahdi Kāsim Khān. Kunwar Mān Singh, Said Khān, and Rāja Bhagwān Dās had gone into the fortress. On the Emperor's reaching Pānipat, Malik Sāni Kābul, *diwān* of Mirza Hākīm, deserted the Mirza and came to the Imperial camp. He alighted at the tent of Khwāja Shāh Mansūr.... The Emperor was already suspicious of Mansūr, and his doubts were now confirmed. So he dismissed Mansūr, and showed him the Mirza's letter. Mansūr asseverated (his innocence), but it was of no use.

'The Emperor proceeded to Shāhābad, and there he came into possession of other incriminating letters..... On hearing and considering these letters, it appeared to His Majesty that Sharāf Beg had written one of them to Khwāja Mansūr, and that the other was certainly connected with the coming of Mirza Hākīm's *diwān* Malik Sāni, to Khwāja Mansūr. Many of the *amirs* and officers of State were on bad terms with the Khwāja, and these exerted their influence to secure his death. So the Emperor gave the order for his execution, and he was hanged next morning.

'Three days afterwards intelligence came in that Mirza Muhammad Hākīm, having been informed of the Emperor's march towards the Punjab, had passed the river of Lahore, and gone to Kabul. The Emperor advanced from Sirhind to Kalanaur, and from thence to New Rohtas. There he received good news, and hunting as he went along, he reached the Indus... He ordered a fort to be built on the banks of the Indus, which is called Sindsāgar, and he called it Attak Banaras. Boats were scarce; so he ordered the *amirs* to produce some. He assigned their respective posts to the *amirs*. Kunwar Mān Singh... and others were sent over the river towards Peshāwar. When they took possession of that city, the Emperor sent Prince Murād along with others to effect the conquest of Kabul.

'At this time envoys from Mirza Hākīm came to beg pardon for his offences. The Emperor sent Hāji Habibu-lla along with them to Kabul,

promising him forgiveness, on condition that he repented of the past, would bind himself by oath (for the future), and would send his sister to the Imperial Court. . . . . But when Prince Murād came to within seven *kos* of Kabul, Mirza Hākim issued forth and attacked him; but he was defeated and put to flight. The victorious Prince then entered Kabul. . . . On Friday, 10th Rajab (9 August 1581), the Emperor himself entered his grandfather's capital, and remained there for twenty days visiting the gardens. . . . . The Mirza (Muhammad Hākim) having made a promise and a vow of fidelity, and executed an engagement, . . . His Majesty then turned towards Hindustan, after conferring Kabul upon Mirza Muhammad Hākim. . . . . He arrived at Lahore on the last day of Ramzān.

'He entrusted the government of the Punjab to Said Khān, Rāja Bhagwān Dās, and Kunwar Mān Singh, and went on his way hunting to Fathpur. . . . On the 25th Shawwal he arrived at Delhi (1st December 1581).

'When the Emperor had been engaged in the Kabul campaign, Bahādur Ali, son of Saiyid Badakhshi, entered the country of Tirhut, and gave himself the title of Bahādur Shāh (and according to Badāuni, caused the *khutbah* to be read and coins to be struck in his name); but he was taken prisoner and killed by the men of Khān-i-āzam. Masum Khān Faran-khudi (who had fled to the Siwāliks) being in distress, begged pardon for his offences, through Khān-i-āzam, and in consequence of the Khān's intercession he was pardoned.'

"The success of the Kabul expedition," observes Smith, "gave him (Akbar) an absolutely free hand for the rest of his life, and may be regarded as the climax of his career."

*The Gujarat Rebellion* : Nizām-ud-dīn's account of the rebellion in Gujarat is too long to be reproduced here. Besides, little interest attaches to the narrative, except in the fact that the author himself took part in the campaign of suppression. The following brief account of it by Smith sets out the salient features in a nut-shell :—

"During the progress of the wars in Bengal and the expedition to Kabul, the province of Gujarat was much disturbed by the revolt of Muzāffar Shāh, ex-King of that country. He had escaped from surveillance in 1578, and taken refuge at Junāgarh in Kathiawar until 1583, when he collected and started a formidable rebellion, which lasted for about eight years. When Itimed Khān was appointed viceroy in 1583 he was lucky enough to be assisted by Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad, the historian, in the capacity of *bakshi*, who proved himself to be a most energetic and efficient officer. In September 1583, Muzāffar took Ahmedābad, and assumed the title and state of King. In November, he treacherously killed Kutb-ud-dīn, the distinguished imperial officer who had surrendered to him, and he occupied Bharoch. The alarming news from the west obliged Akbar to return from

Allahābad to the capital in January 1585. He had meantime appointed Mirza Khān (Abdurrahim, Bairām Khān's son), better known by his later title of *Khān-khānan*, to the government of Gujarat. The pretender was severely defeated by much inferior imperial forces at the battle of Sarkhej near Ahmedābad in January 1584, and again at Nadot or Nandod in Rājpipla. After many vicissitudes he was driven into Cutch (Kacch), where he received support from certain local chiefs. Nizām-ud-dīn inflicted a terrible punishment on their territory by destroying nearly 300 villages and ravaging two *parganas*. He was then recalled. Muzāffar continued to give trouble in the wild regions of Kathiawar and Cutch until 1591-92, when he was captured. He committed suicide by cutting his throat, or at any rate was reported to have done so. Abdurrahim got his title of *Khān-khānan* for his defeat of Muzāffar."

#### *Settlement of the Frontiers :*

Akbar, having successfully passed through the crisis above described, undertook campaigns which were more or less of an aggressive character, intended mostly to round off his territories by a settlement of its frontiers. The annexation of Kabul, Kashmir, Kandahār, Sind, and Orissa, and the subjugation of the Baluchi and Yusufzai, as well as the campaigns against the Uzbeks in Badakhshān, are all illustrative of this. Having once secured these, he led his last aggressive campaigns for the conquest of the southern kingdoms of the Deccan.

*Annexation of Kabul :* The death of Mirza Muhammad Hākīm gave the occasion for the incorporation of Kabul into Akbar's dominions. 'The Mirza,' says Nizām-ud-dīn, 'was the Emperor's own brother, but the Emperor had shown him kindness and affection greater than even that of a brother. For the Mirza had often been presumptuous and aggressive, and the Emperor had not only pardoned him and showed him favour, but had sent *amirs* and armies to maintain him in Kabul. He was greatly addicted to wine, and excessive drinking was the cause of his illness and death. He died on the 12th Shaban 993 H. (July 1585). When the news of his death reached the Emperor, he was much grieved ; and after the period of mourning was over, his purpose was to confirm the country of Kabul to the sons of the Mirza. But the nobles urged that the Mirza's sons were of tender age, and incapable of ruling ; and that the Uzbek army which had already taken Badakhshān was on the look out for Kabul also. These considerations induced the Emperor to march to the Punjab, and he began his march on the 10th of Ramzān. ....

'The Emperor travelled by successive stages without making any halts to Delhi. There he visited the tomb of his father and the shrines of the saints, and dispensed his charity upon the poor, and celebrated the *Id*. On the 19th Shawwal he reached the bank of the Sutlej and encamped. There he was informed that Kunwar Mān Singh had sent a body of men across the Indus to Peshāwar, and that Shāh Beg, the officer of Mirza Muhammad Hākīm, had fled to Kabul.... On the 28th he (Akbar) reached and crossed the Beyah. Here he received a despatch from Mān Singh, reporting that the people of Kabul had willingly submitted to the Imperial rule.... Moreover, Faridun Khān, the uncle of the late Mirza, when Kunwar Mān Singh entered Kabul in hot haste, finding that he was helpless, brought the young princes to wait upon the Kunwar. They were received with great kindness and assurances of protection. Mān Singh left his own sons in Kabul in the charge of Shams-ud-dīn Khāfi, and set off with the young princes and the nobles of Kabul to meet the Emperor.... They were received with princely generosity (at Rāwalpindi). Each of the chief attendants received five or six thousand rupees as a gift. Suitable allowances and *jagirs* were also granted.... His Majesty placed Kunwar Mān Singh in command, and gave him Kabul in *jagir*.

*Reduction of the Afghans, etc.* 'When the Emperor reached Atak, he sent Bhagwān Dās, Shāh Kuli Mahram, and other well known *amirs*, with about 5,000 horse, to effect the conquest of Kashmir. On the same day Ismail Kuli Khān and Rai Singh were sent against the Baluchis. Next day Zain Khān Koka was sent with a force against the Afghans of Swat and Bajaur, to reduce that turbulent people to order. The Emperor encamped at Atak on the 15th Muharram 994 H.

'In former times a Hindustani soldier had come among the Afghans, and set up an heretical sect. He induced many foolish people to become his disciples, and he gave himself the title of *Pir Roshanai*. He was dead, but his son Jalāl, a youth of about fourteen, came in the year 989 H. to wait upon the Emperor, as he was returning from Kabul. He was kindly received; but after a few days his evil disposition induced him to take flight, and go off to the Afghans. There he raised disturbances; and gathering a good number of men under him, he shut up the roads between Hindustan and Kabul. In order to repress this base sect of *Roshanais*, His Majesty placed Kunwar Mān Singh in command and gave him Kabul in *jagir*.

'When intelligence arrived of Zain Khān having entered the country of Swat, and of his having encountered this sect of Afghans, who were as numerous as ants and locusts, on the 2nd Safar 994 H., Sayid Khān Gakar, Rāja Bīrbal and others were sent with forces to support him. A few days later Hākīm Abu-l-Fath was sent after



them with additional forces. After these reinforcements had joined, Zain Khān began to plunder and ravage the Afghans, and great spoil fell into his hands. When they reached the pass of Karagar, a person observed to Rāja Bīrbal that the Afghans meditated a night attack, that the extent of the mountain and of the pass was only three or four *kos*, and that if they got through the pass they would be safe from the attack designed. Rāja Bīrbal, without making any communication to Zain Khān, pushed on to get through the pass, and all his army followed. At close of day, when the sun was about to set, they reached a defile, the heights of which on every side were covered with Afghans. Arrows and stones were showered upon them in the narrow pass, and in the darkness men lost their path, and perished in the recesses of the mountain. A terrible defeat and slaughter followed. Nearly 8,000 men were killed, and Rāja Bīrbal, who fled for his life was slain. . . On the 5th Rabi'u-l-awwal, Zain Khān Koka and Hākim Abu-l-Fath were defeated and reached the fort of Atak with difficulty.

' This defeat greatly troubled the Emperor.\* He dismissed these commanders, and sent Rāja Todar Mal with a large army to repair the disaster. The Rāja entered the mountain region with great caution. Here and there he built forts, and harried and plundered continually, so that he reduced the Afghans to great straits. Rāja Mān Singh, who had marched against these sectaries, fought a hard battle with them in the Khaibar Pass, in which many of them were slain and made prisoners. The Rāja obtained a great victory (1586).

*Conquest of Kashmir* : ' When Rāja Bhagwān Dās, Shāh Kuli Khān Mahram, and others who had been sent against Kashmir, reached the pass of Bhuliyas, on the confines of Kashmir, Yusuf Khān, the ruler of that country, came up and blockaded the pass. The Imperial forces remained for some days inactive, snow and rain came on, and supplies of corn were cut off. Moreover, the news of the defeat of Zain arrived, and the army was in great difficulty. The *amirs* resolved to make peace. They settled a tribute to be paid by saffron, shawls, and by the mint, to the royal treasury, and they appointed collectors. (They gave the country entirely over to Yusuf

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\* Akbar in particular grieved very much over the death of his jovial companion Rāja Bīrbal and is said to have been so much moved that he gave up food and drink for two days. Badāuni says : ' He never experienced such grief at the death of any *amir* as he did at that of Bīrbal.'

—Badāuni, ii, p. 352) Yusuf was delighted with these terms, and came to visit the *amirs*, and they brought him along with them to visit the Emperor. When they came to Court, the Emperor disapproved of the peace, and the *amirs* were forbidden his presence, but after some days they were allowed to make their obeisance. . . . . Then Muhammad Kāsim Khān *Mir-bahr* . . . was sent with a large force to effect the conquest of Kashmir.

‘After seven marches they entered the defiles of the mountains. When they reached the pass of Kartal, Yākub, the son of Yusuf Khān, (who ‘had been thrown into prison, and was treated as dead by his son’—Badāuni, ii, p. 353) considering himself ruler of Kashmir, came with a considerable force to oppose them. But fortune fought for the Imperial army, and the stone of dissension was cast among the Kashmiris. The chiefs of Kashmir were distressed with the rule of Yākub, and several deserted from him and joined Kāsim Khān. Another party raised the standard of rebellion in Srinagar, which is the capital of the country. Yākub deeming it of primary importance to crush the internal rebellion, returned to Kashmir. The Imperial army then entered Kashmir without opposition, and Yākub, unable to make any resistance, fled to the mountains. Srinagar was occupied, and revenue collectors were appointed to all the *parganas*.

‘The Emperor, being informed of the contest, sent letters of thanks to Kāsim Khān and the other *amirs*, and bestowed honours and promotions upon all of them. Yakub raised a force and fought with Kāsim, but was defeated. Another time he tried a night surprise, but was unsuccessful. The royal forces pursued him into hills full of trees and defiles beating him and driving him before them. He was very nearly captured. At last in wretched plight and in humble mood, he waited upon Kāsim Khān, and enrolled himself among the subjects of the Imperial throne.’ Badāuni adds that he was eventually sent into Bihar to Rāja Mān Singh, to join his father; and both Yusuf and Yākub there died in confinement, worn out with troubles and chagrin.

The Emperor after this paid a visit to Kashmir and Kabul and attended to the transfer of several of the important officers. ‘The government of Kabul was given to Zain Khān Koka, and Rāja Mān Singh was recalled to Court and the government of Bihar and Bengal was conferred upon him. About the same time the government of Kashmir was given to Mirza Yusuf Khān Rizwi, and Kāsim Khān *Mir-bahr* was recalled. Sadik Khān was sent to Swat and Bajaur against the Yusufzais, and *jagirs* of Mān Singh at Sialkot and elsewhere were granted to him. Ismail Kuli Khān was recalled from Swat and Bajaur, and sent to Gujarat, to replace Khaljī Khān, who was summoned to Court. . . . Khaljī Khān arrived from Gujarat, and

was appointed to assist Rāja Todar Mal in Revenue and Civil administration.' But when the Emperor was still at Kabul, 'Intelligence reached him that Rāja Todar Mal *wakilu-s saltanat*, and *mushrif-i diwān*, and Rāja Bhagwān Dās *amiru-l umara*, had died at Lahore. On the 8th Muharram 998, the Emperor started on his return to Hindustan, leaving the government of Kabul in the hands of Muhammad Kasim *Mir-bahr*. . . . He gave the government of Gujarat to Mirza Aziz Muhammad Kokaltash *Azam Khān*, who held the government of Mālwa. He recalled me, Nizām-ud-dīn Ahmad, the author of this work, to Court. To Khān-khānan he gave Jaunpur instead of the *jaḡir* which he had held in Gujarat.

*Sind and the Baluchis* : 'The city of Lahore had been for some years the royal residence, and many chiefs of that quarter had come to wait upon the Emperor. But Jāni Beg, of Thatta, although he had sent letters and tribute, had never come in person to enroll himself among the supporters of the Imperial throne. Khān-khānan was now appointed governor of Multan and Bhakkar, and he was commanded to effect the conquest of Sindh and the Baluchis. In the month of Rabi'u-s sani (1590) he was sent on his enterprise, along with a number of nobles whose names are too numerous to mention.

Jāni Beg was soon compelled to make an offer of capitulation, and promise to go and wait upon the Emperor. He begged for the period of three months to make preparations for his journey, and this was conceded. It being the rainy season, Khān-khānan remained in the village of Sann, in the vicinity of Sehwan, for that time. The fort of Sehwan was surrendered, and Jāni Beg gave his daughter in marriage to Mirza Iraj, son of Khān-khānan. He also surrendered twenty *ghrabs* (three-masted ships). The intelligence of this victory gave the Emperor great joy, as he deemed it a good augury of his success in Kashmir.

*Annexation of Orissa* : 'Intelligence here reached him that Rāja Mān Singh had fought a great battle with the sons of Kutlu Afghan, who, since his death, had held the country of Orissa, and, having defeated them, he had annexed that extensive country, which lies beyond Bengal, to the Imperial dominions." The new province was attached to the *Subah* of Bengal, and continued to be part of the Empire until 1751, when the Marathas conquered it from Alivardi Khān.

*Baluchistan and Kandahār* : "The year 1595 saw the completion of the conquests and annexations in the north-west effected by the arms of Akbar's officers or through diplomacy based on the terror of his name. In February of that year Mir Masum, the historian, who wielded the sword and the pen with equal facility, attacked the fort of Siwi to the south-east of Quetta which was held by the Parni Afghans. The tribesmen who mustered in force to defend their stronghold, were defeated in battle, and after consideration surrendered the place, with the result that all Baluchistan, as far as the frontiers of the Kandahār province, and including Mekran, the region near the coast, passed under the imperial sceptre. A little later, in April, Kandahār itself came into Akbar's possession without bloodshed.... The Persian governor, Muzāffar Husain Mirza, being involved in quarrels with relatives and in danger from the Uzbegs, asked Akbar to depute an officer to take over charge. The Emperor, of course, complied gladly, and sent Shāh Beg, who had been in the service of his brother at Kabul. The city, thus peacefully acquired, remained under the Indian government until 1622, when Jahāngīr lost it. Shāh-jahān regained it and held it from 1638 to 1649, when it was finally separated from the empire."

*Badakhshān and the Uzbegs* : Akbar was ambitious to reconquer his ancestral dominions in Trans-Oxiana. When he marched to Kabul, he was 'intent upon effecting the conquest of Badakhshān.' Later, 'Mirza Suleimān, with the assistance of Mirza Muhammad Hākīm, had returned to Badakhshān, and obtained a victory over the army of Abdu-lla Khān Uzbeg.....Abdulla Khān of Badakhshān, when he was informed of Mirza Suleimān's success, gathered a strong force, which he sent to oppose him. Mirza Suleimān, unable to cope with this army, retreated to Kabul, and all Badakhshān came into the power of the Uzbegs.' Akbar then tried to conciliate Abdu-lla Khān with diplomacy. Nearly a *lac* and a half of rupees, equal to 37,000 *tumans* of Irak, goods of Hindustan, and curiosities were entrusted to Muhammad Ali *Khazānchi* for presentation to Abdu-lla Khān.' But all this was of little avail. On the contrary, Akbar was in constant anxiety about the activities of the rebel Uzbek leaders, until the death, in 1598, of Abdu-lla Khān, when, relieved of all danger from that direction, he turned definitely towards the south.

#### *Conquest of the Deccan :*

In August 1591, Akbar had sent diplomatic missions to the vari-

ous kingdoms of the Deccan : 'Faizi, the brother of the learned Sheikh Abu-l-Faḍl, to Asīr and Burhānpur ; Khwāja Amin-ud-dīn to Ahmednagar ; Mir Muhammad Amin Mashudi to Bijapur ; and Mirza Masud to Golkonda.' But in 1593, 'the ambassadors, whom the King had despatched to the Deccan, returned, communicating that all the kings had refused to acknowledge the supremacy of Akbar, who accordingly determined to reduce them to subjection. Only Rāja Ali Khān, the ruler of Khāndesh, who was 'a man of great talent, just, wise, prudent, and brave,' had showed indications of being loyal. "The chief importance of Rāja Ali Khān's territory lay in the fact that it included the mighty fortress of Asīrgarh, commanding the main road to the Deccan, and justly regarded as one of the strongest and best equipped fortresses in Europe or Asia." There was no unity among the Sultans of the Deccan, and they continued to fight among themselves, in spite of the common danger that now threatened their independence. Burhānu-l Mulk of Ahmednagar died in 1594, and was succeeded by his son Ibrāhīm who was killed in battle by the Bijapuris in 1595. 'The Ahmednagar nobles, refusing to acknowledge the new king, rebelled, and besieged Ahmednagar. In this dilemma, finding himself unable to cope with his enemies, the party supporting the young prince entreated the help of the Mughals in Gujarat. Prince Murād, having previously orders from his father, Akbar, to march into the Deccan, gladly embraced the proposal, and moved with great expedition to the south.' Abdurrahman, Khān-khānan, also marched to the south at the same time.

*Siege of Ahmednagar :* 'Mian Manju (the minister) having, by this time, suppressed the rebellion, repented of his having called in the Mughals, and had already laid in a store of provisions in Ahmednagar to defend it. He left Chānd Bibi, the daughter of Husain Nizām Shāh, to assume command of the fort, and himself marched with the remainder of the army, and a large train of artillery, towards the Bijapur frontier. The Prince Murād and Khān-khānan, instead of coming as allies now proceeded to lay siege to Ahmednagar. In November 1595, the besiegers opened their trenches, and carried on approaches by raising mounds, erecting batteries, and sinking mines ; while Chānd Bibi, defended the place with masculine resolution, and wrote letters to Ibrāhīm Adil Shāh of Bijapur, and Kutb Shāh of Golkonda for aid. At the end of three months, .....Chānd Bibi appeared with a veil on her head. She got guns to be brought to bear on the assailants, and stones to be hurled on them, so that they were repulsed in several repeated attacks. During the night, she stood by the workmen, and caused the breach to be filled up nine feet, before daylight, with wood, stones, and earth, and dead carcasses.

Meanwhile, a report prevailed that the general of Ibrāhīm Adil Shāh was on his march, in conjunction with Kutb-Shāhi troops, at the head of an army of 70,000 horse, to raise the siege. At the same time, a scarcity of provisions prevailing in the Mughal camp, the Prince and Khān-khānān thought it advisable to enter into negotiations with the besieged. It was stipulated by Chānd Bibi, that Akbar should retain Berar, while Ahmednagar and its original dependencies should remain entirely in the hands of Bahādur Shāh, the grandson of Burhān Nizām Shāh II. These terms being ratified, the Prince Murād and Khān-khānān marched towards Berar, where they built the town of Shāhpur, near Bālāpur, and formed cantonments in that place (1596).

'After the departure of the Mughals, Chānd Bibi resigned her authority, . . . . . and the nobles, contrary to her advice, and in violation of the late treaty, marched with 50,000 horse to the north, in order to expel the Mughals from Berar ; while Khān-khānān leaving the Prince in Shāhpur, moved with 20,000 horse accompanied by Rāja Ali Khān Fārukhi, to oppose them on the banks of the Godāvari. On reaching the village of Supa, Khān-khānān halted for some days to inform himself of the situation and the strength of the enemy, and having forded the river, then only knee-deep, drew up his army on the south bank. . . The Nizām-Shāhi troops were on the right, the Kutb-Shāhi on the left, and Adil-Shāhis in the centre.'

'The Imperial troops, however, suffered a defeat. Finally, Akbar marched in person to the south, leaving his dominions in the north under the charge of the Prince Royal, Muhammad Salim Mirza (1599).

'Meanwhile, Dāniyal Mirza and the Khān-khānān entered the Deccan. Mirān Bahādur Khān, son of Rāja Ali Khān, unlike his father, assumed a hostile position in Asīrgarh after the Mughal army had gone to the south. The Prince deemed it prudent, therefore, to halt on the banks of the Godāvari, near Paithan, in order to conciliate him. But Akbar having reached Māndu directed the Mirza to proceed to Ahmednagar, as he himself intended to besiege Asīrgarh. Dāniyal and Khān-khānān accordingly marched with about 30,000 horse towards Ahmednagar. The Deccani officers flying before them, left the Mughals at liberty to advance without molestation.' The city of Ahmednagar easily fell into the hands of the Mughals, owing to its internal dissensions. Chānd Bibi the only capable leader, was either murdered or constrained to take poison. The town surrendered in August 1600, after 1500 of the garrison had been put to the sword. The young prince and his family were committed to life-long imprisonment in the fort of Gwalior.

*Capture of Asīrgarh* : 'Akbar failed in inducing Mirān Bahādur Khān to submit to his authority. He accordingly proceeded to Burhānpur, and directed one of his generals to besiege Asīrgarh which lay only six *kos* from that place. After the siege had continued a considerable time, the air, on account of the number of troops cooped up in the fort, became very unhealthy. This occasioned a pestilence which swept off several of the garrison ;

and although Mirān Bahādur Khān had still sufficient men for the defence of Asir, as well as a large magazine of warlike stores and provisions, he began to despair. At this time also Ahmednagar fell.... In the beginning of the year 1009 H. (1600), Mirān Bahādur Khān, losing all courage, resigned the strong fortress of Asir into the hands of Akbar, and yielded up treasures and stores which had been accumulating therein for many ages. The wealth of Ahmednagar was also brought to Burhānpur. Ibrāhim Adil Shāh of Bijapur sent an ambassador to conciliate Akbar, and consented to give his daughter in marriage to his son, Prince Dāniyal Mirza. A Mughal noble was accordingly despatched with suitable offerings to escort the bride from Bijapur.'

Asir, Burhānpur, Ahmednagar, and Berar, were now consolidated into one province, the government of which was conferred upon Dāniyal Mirza, under the management of Khān-khānan. The King, after these transactions, having returned in triumph to the city of Agra, in the year 1011 H. (1602), assumed by proclamation the title of Emperor of the Deccan, in addition to his other titles.

#### *Death of Akbar :*

The above narrative of the conquest of the Deccan is mainly extracted from Ferishta. The exact nature of the capitulation of Asirgarh is a subject of keen controversy. "Asirgarh," says Smith, "was the last of the long list of Akbar's conquests, which had been practically continuous for forty-five years." The history of the remaining few years of Akbar's reign is thus briefly recorded by Ferishta :—

'In the course of the same year (1602), Sheikh Abu-l Faql, was recalled from the Deccan ; and that learned man was unfortunately attacked and cut off in the district of Nurwur, by banditti near Orcha. In the month of Safar, 1013 (June, 1604), Mir Jamāl-ud-din Husain, who had been deputed to Bijapur, returned with the royal bride and the stipulated dowry. He delivered the young Sultānā to Dāniyal upon the banks of the Godāvari near Paithan, where the nuptials were celebrated with great magnificence ; after which, Mir Jamāl-ud-din Husain proceeded to join the King at Agra. On the 1st of Zilhuj of the year 1013, the Prince Dāniyal died, in the city of Burhānpur, owing to excess of drinking. His death and the circumstances connected with it, so much affected the King, who was in a declining state of health, that he every day became worse, till, on the 13th of Jumadu's-sani, in the year 1014 H. (13 October 1605), he died, after a reign of fifty-one years and some months. Eternity belongeth only to that King to whom our worship is due. The words "*The death of King Akbar*" contain the numeral letters which comprise the date of his death.'

This account, although it refers to the assassination of Abu-l Faḍl, fails to point out its connection with Prince Salim's rebellion. The murder of his great companion, as well as the misdemeanour of Prince Salim, must certainly have hastened Akbar's approaching end. The details concerning these closing events may be only briefly stated here :—

Prince Salim, on the testimony of Badāuni has been accused of having poisoned his father, as early as 1591. 'In this year,' says Badāuni, 'the Emperor's constitution became a little deranged and he suffered from stomach-ache and cholic. . . . In his unconscious state he uttered some words which arose from suspicion of his eldest son, and accused him of giving poison.' Commenting upon this, Smith observes, "It is impossible to say whether or not the suspicion was then justified; but it is certain that in 1600 Salim had become utterly weary of waiting for the long-deferred and ardently desired succession." In 1598, when Akbar left for the southern campaign, he left Salim in charge at the capital. In 1600, when Usmān Khān, an Afghan chief, rebelled in Bengal, Salim was asked to proceed to the eastern province, but he preferred to remain at Allahābad, appropriated the vast revenues of Bihar (amounting to no less than 30 *lacs* of rupees) and assigned jagirs to some of his supporters. It was this grave misconduct of Salim that had made Akbar somehow finish the conquest of Asīgarh and hasten to the north. Akbar reached Agra in May 1601, and heard that Salim was coming to the court with 30,000 horse; had, in fact, reached Etāwah, only 73 miles from the capital. Akbar thereupon ordered him to return to Allahābad, and at the same time conferred on him the government of Bengal and Orissa. Early in 1602, Salim required that he should be permitted to come to the capital with 70,000 men, that all his grants to his officers should be confirmed, and that his adherents should not be regarded as rebels. Still, Akbar could not make up his mind to fight this strange rebel. In the meanwhile, Salim continued in royal style at Allahābad, struck coin in his own name, and even had the impudence to send specimens of them to Akbar.

Unable to endure all this, the Emperor communicated his son's insolence to Abu-l Faḍl in the Deccan. The valiant minister recommended strong action, and himself undertook to bring the Prince bound to the Court. But unfortunately, as stated above, he was in-



tercepted by the hand of the assassin, Bīr Singh Bundela who had been hired for the purpose by Salim. His head was sent to Allahābad, and "Salim received it with unholy joy and treated it with shameful insult." Salim records this crime in the following terms :—

'Sheikh Abu-l Faḍl who excelled the Sheikhzādas of Hindustan in wisdom and learning, had adorned himself outwardly with the jewel of sincerity, and sold it to my father at a heavy price. He had been summoned from the Deccan, and since his feelings towards me were not honest, he both publicly and privately spoke against me... It became necessary to prevent him from coming to court. As Bīr Singh Deo's country was exactly on the route and he was then a rebel, I sent him a message that if he would stop that sedition-monger and kill him he would receive every kindness from me. By God's grace, when Sheikh Abu-l Faḍl was passing through Bīr Singh Deo's country, the Rājā blocked his road, and after a little contest scattered his men and killed him. He sent his head to me in Allahābad. Although this was a cause of anger in the mind of the late King (Akbar), in the end it enabled me to proceed, without much disturbance of mind, to kiss the threshold of my father's palace, and by degrees the resentment of the King was cleared away.'

Akbar became furious, and, distracted with grief, he declared : "If Salim wanted to be the Emperor, he might have killed me and spared Abu-l Faḍl." For three days he abstained from appearing in public audience, and sent urgent orders to apprehend Bīr Singh Deo. The murderer, though hotly pursued and wounded on one occasion, evaded capture, and lived to enjoy the favour of Jahāngīr. "The murder," says Smith, "was effectual for two years in stopping Akbar from taking strong measures to coerce his rebellious son."

About April 1603, a temporary reconciliation was effected between father and son through the intercession of Salima Begum (Bairām Khān's widow, daughter of Humāyun's sister Gulbadan Begum, whom Akbar had married,—the mother of Murād). Akbar went to the extent of taking off his own turban, and placing it on the head of his son, thus publicly recognising him as heir to the throne. But it was all in vain. Again, when Salim was ordered to march against Amar Singh (son of Rājā Pratāp), he went off to Allahābad and resumed his old and unfilial ways. Akbar was prevented from going after him by the death of his own mother Maryam Makāni in August 1604. In November, when Salim came to the capital, Akbar severely reproached him for his unfilial conduct, and by way of punishment deprived him of his accustomed dose of opium for 24 hours (according to *Ma'asir-i Jahāngīr*, of both liquor and opium for ten days), but ulti-

mately softened and pardoned him. After this, Salim humbly accepted the government of the western provinces which had been held by his brother Dāniyal but continued to live at Agra until Akbar's death in October 1605.

Asad Beg records : 'During the Emperor's illness the weight of affairs fell upon the Khān-i-āzam (Aziz Koka), and when it became evident that the life of that illustrious sovereign was drawing to a close, he consulted the Rāja Mān Singh, one of the principal nobles, and they agreed to make Sultan Khusru Emperor. They were both versed in business and possessed of great power, and determined to seize the Prince (Salim), when he came, according to his daily custom, to pay his respects at Court, thus displaying the nature of their mind, little considering that the sun cannot be smeared with mud, nor the marks of the pen of destiny be erased by the pen-knife of treachery. He whom the hand of the power of Allah upholds, though he be helpless in himself, is safe from all evil.' When these designs were frustrated by other loyal nobles, who declared, "This is contrary to the laws and customs of the Chaghatai Tartars, and shall never be ;" Rāja Mān Singh saw the change in the aspect of affairs, and took Sultan Khusru with him to his own palace, and prepared boat, intending to escape the next day to Bengal. As soon as the Prince was relieved from all anxiety as to the course affairs were taking, he went with the great nobles, and Mir Murtaza Khān at their head, without fear, to the fort, and approached the dying Emperor. He was still breathing, as if he had only waited to see that illustrious one (Salim). As soon as that most fortunate Prince entered, he bowed himself at the feet of His Majesty. He saw that he was in his last agonies. The Emperor once more opened his eyes, and signed to them to invest him with the turban and robes which had been prepared for him, and to gird him with his own dagger. The attendants prostrated themselves and did homage ; at the same moment that sovereign, whose sins are forgiven, bowed himself also and closed his life.'

There are various stories as to Akbar's death being due to poisoning ; but Smith writes, "On the whole, while it is perhaps most probable that Akbar died a natural death, the general belief that he was poisoned in some fashion by somebody may have been well-founded. The materials do not warrant a definite judgment."

#### *Akbar and the Europeans :*

The Portuguese were the principal Europeans with whom Akbar came into contact, both with a religious and secular purpose. Although the Jesuits belonged to different nationalities, they acted in close unison with the Portuguese authorities at Goa. The English contact with Akbar was very slight.

In 1561, "the Portuguese were strongly established on the western coast in fortified settlements taken from the Sultans of the Deccan, and situated at Goa, with a considerable territory attached ; Chaul, Bombaim (Bombay) with neighbouring places ; Bassein ; Daman, Diu. Their fleet controlled the mercantile and pilgrim traffic of the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf. No other European power had gained any footing on the soil of India, and no Englishman had even landed in the country."

Akbar met the Portuguese for the first time during his Gujarat campaign. In 1572, while at Cambay, some Portuguese merchants came to pay their respects. The next year, according to Abu-l Faḍl, 'whilst the siege of Surat was proceeding, a large party of Christians from the port of Goa arrived ; they were admitted to an audience with the Emperor, although it was probable that they had come to assist the besieged, and to get the fort into their own hands. But when they saw the strength of the Imperial force, and its power of carrying on the siege, they represented themselves to be ambassadors, and besought the honour of an interview. They offered various articles of the country as presents. Akbar treated each one of them with great condescension, and conversed with them about the affairs of Portugal, and other European matters.' A treaty was also entered into with Antonio Cabral, the Portuguese envoy from Goa, one of the principal terms of which was assurance of the safety of the pilgrims to Mecca, who used to be molested by the Christians.

In 1576, the year following the building of the *Ibādat-Khāna* (or the House of Worship), Akbar met two Jesuits (Anthony Vaz and Peter Diaz) in Bengal. Their reproof of Christian converts who wanted to defraud the Imperial treasury, by refusing to pay some legitimate shipping and other dues, impressed Akbar to a great extent about these strangers from Europe. Accordingly, he sent for Father Julian Pereira, the Vicar General at Sātgaon. But the worthy Father "being a man of more piety than learning" could not satisfy Akbar's curiosity about the Christian religion.

In 1577, Akbar consulted Pietro Tavares, the captain or commandant of the port of Hugli ; but, says Smith, "Naturally, he too was ill-qualified to answer correctly the various conundrums proposed to him." Nevertheless, Akbar made him a grant of land, some time between 1578-80.

In 1578, Antonio Cabral again visited Akbar at his Court ; "but being a layman, he was not in a position to expound with authority the deeper matters of the faith."

These failures only whetted Akbar's curiosity more. So he sent despatches to Goa, both of a secular and religious character. He sent Hāji Abdulla to bring from Goa European curios, and to copy anything worthy of imitation. Among the things that he brought back was a musical organ 'like a great box, the size of a man, played by a European sitting inside.' The wind was supplied by bellows or fans of peacock's feathers. Some Europeans, and others dressed like Europeans also accompanied the organ. But the more important purpose of the embassy was for missionaries.

*First Jesuit Mission from Goa* : In September 1579, Akbar's embassy reached Goa with the following message :—

'Order of Jalālu-dīn the Great, King by God appointed : Fathers of the Order of St. Paul, know that I am most kindly disposed towards you. I send Abdulla, my ambassador, and Dominic Pires, to ask you in my name to send me two learned priests who should bring with them the chief books of the Law and the Gospel, for I wish to study and learn the Law and what is best and most perfect in it. The moment my ambassadors return let them not hesitate to come with them and let them bring the books of the Law. Know also that so far as I can I shall receive most kindly and honourably the priests who will come. Their arrival will give me the greatest pleasure, and when I shall know about the Law and its perfection what I wish to know, they will be at liberty to return as soon as they like, and I shall not let them go without loading them with honours and gifts. Therefore, let them not have the slightest fear to come. I take them under my protection. Fare you well.'

Although at first the Portuguese Viceroy hesitated, the Committee of Bishops decided on 10 November 1579, in favour of the despatch of the Mission. The Fathers selected for the service were Rudolf Aquaviva, Anthony Monserrate, and Francis Henriquez. "Of these, Henriquez was a Persian by origin, a native of Ormuz and a convert from Islam, who was intended to help as interpreter to the Mission. Monserrate, a Spaniard from Catalonia, forty-three years of age, was a wise and observant man of studious habits, and to him we owe an admirable first-hand description of the Mission and of the Mughal Court ... Rudolf Aquaviva, the third member and leader of the Mission, was an Italian of high social status and of outstanding sanctity."

The Mission started on 17 November 1579, and reached Fathpur Sikri on 27 or 28 February 1580. "This Mission," observes Sir Edward Maclagan, "came to Akbar's Court at a time of great interest in the development of his religious policy, and its doings have received notice at the hands of the contemporary Indian Historians, Badaoni and Abul Fazl; the former writing from the orthodox Muslim standpoint and the latter from Akbar's own eclecticism. We have also first-hand information recorded by the members of the Mission themselves." Monserrate's *Relacam* (1582) contains "the best contemporary sketch of the character and power of Akbar at the time of the Mission and the *Commentarius* (1590) which forms the best account which we possess of the Mission itself."

The object of the Mission was the "glory of the Church and the benefit of Portugal." The missionaries were ambitious of converting the inhabitants of "Mogor". But as Maclagan says, "in view of the unsolicited invitation addressed to Goa and the known proclivities of Akbar, it was ardently hoped that this object might be achieved through the medium of the conversion of the King. All the efforts of the Mission were therefore at the first concentrated on the King himself. Royal converts were not unknown in the Indies.....a near relation of Bijapur had been baptised at Goa shortly after Father Rudolf's arrival from Europe.....There was therefore nothing impossible or fantastic in the scheme of the Mission and, as the Jesuits were admittedly the Order best fitted to deal with such cases, the Mission commenced with well-founded hopes of success."

Akbar received the members of the Mission very cordially :

"On arrival they were offered large sums of money, and gained much consideration by their refusal to accept more than was necessary for subsistence. They were accorded quarters in the palace...They were given food from the royal table; and, when Monserrate was ill, the King proceeded to visit him and greeted him in Portuguese. In personal intercourse with the King the Fathers were treated with special courtesy. 'He never allowed them', says Monserrate, 'to remain uncovered in his presence; both at the solemn meetings of the grandees and in private interviews, when he would take them inside for private colloquy, he would tell them to sit near him. He would shake hands with them most familiarly and would call them apart from the body of ordinary retainers to indulge with them in private conversation. More than once, in public, he walked a short distance with Rudolf, his arm round Rudolf's neck....' This

familiarity encouraged the Fathers to speak to him seriously on faults in his regime or his conduct....'modestly however and not without first examining what mood he was in.'"

The King, in short, allowed them every liberty, and even permitted them to preach and convert people. 'His Majesty,' says Badāuni, 'ordered Prince Murād to take a few lessons in Christianity under good auspices and charged Abu-l Fadl to translate the Gospel.' During the Kabul campaign, Father Monserrate was allowed to accompany the King, and we have accordingly from the Father's pen an intimate and detailed account of Akbar's camp, his forces, the towns through which he passed, his advance beyond the Indus, and his final triumphant entry into Kabul : a document, as MacLagan points out, which no future historian of Akbar can fail to utilize. 'The King', says Monserrate, 'listened ; but not to appear drawn to the Christian faith, he pretended sometimes to be occupied with other things. At the same time he did not fear to honour and kiss publicly the image of Christ.' At this attitude of Akbar the Fathers got disappointed, and even declared, 'Giving the pearls of the Gospel to the King is exposing them to be trampled and trodden under foot.' The Provincial at Goa, accordingly bade them return, but at the same time left them the discretion to stay on if that would serve any purpose.

Akbar was loth to part with the Fathers, but Monserrate left him under the pretext of leading an embassy from Akbar to Philip II, King of Spain. Rudolf Aquaviva, who was more hopeful, remained at Fathpur for some time longer. His letter to the General of the Society of Jesus is valuable as revealing the hopes and designs of the Christians :—

' First ' he wrote, ' the Emperor is in a more hopeful state than heretofore : he desires to know our Faith and attends to it with greater diligence than at first, showing much affection thereto, though impediments are not also lacking, and the love and familiarity with which he treats us leave nothing to be desired. (2) We hope to see some fruit from the Emperor's second son, Pahari, a boy of thirteen years of age, who is learning the Portuguese language and therewith the things relating to our Faith, and who shows himself well disposed thereto and who is of great natural genius and has good inclination. Father Monserrate was his teacher and now I am. (3) We have discovered a new nation of heathens called Botton (Tibetans) which is beyond Lahore towards the river Indus, a nation very well inclined and given to pious works. They are white men;

and Mohammedans do not live among them, wherefore hope that if two earnest Fathers are sent thither, a great harvest of other heathens may be reaped. (4) There is here an old man, the father of the Emperor's secretary, in whom he confides in matters of Faith. He has left the world and is of great virtue and given much to contemplation of divine things, whence he appears disposed to receive the light of our Faith. He is very friendly to us and listens to our Faith and we have already visited him several times at his house with much consolation. (5) Where we are is the true India, and this realm is but a ladder which leads to the greater part of Asia; and now that the Society has obtained a footing and is so favoured by so great an Emperor and by his sons, it seems not fitting to leave it before trying all possible means to commence the conversion of the continent of India; seeing that all that had so far been done has been merely on the sea-coast.'

In spite of all these hopes, the reports of Father Monserrate were not encouraging, and Father Rudolf was also finally recalled by the Provincial at Goa. In February 1583, he left Akbar carrying with him an appreciatory epistle to the following effect :—

'God is great. Firmān of Jalālu-dīn Muhammad Akbar Pādshāh Ghāzi... With regard to what he (the Provincial) wrote to me about sending hence Father Rudolf,—since I like very much the Book of the Heavenly Jesus, and desire to discover the truth of it with the aid of his skill to find out the meanings of those who have written in the past, therefore I have much love for the Father; and, considering that he is wise and versed in the laws, I desire to have him every hour in conversation with me, and for this reason I refused him the permission; but as Your Paternity asked it of me by letter several times, I did so, and gave him the permission; and as my intention is that our friendship should go on increasing more and more day by day, it behoves your Paternity to labour on your side towards preserving it, by sending Rudolf back to me with some other Father, and I wish this with least possible delay; for I desire that the Fathers of this Order be with me, because I like them much. And to the Father I said many things by word of mouth, for him to repeat them to Your Paternity, which Your Paternity will consider well. Done in the moon of the month of February 1583.'

Father Rudolf, however, met with an unexpected death and martyrdom. On 27 July (N. S.), 1583, he was killed together with four companions by a fanatical mob of Hindus at Cuncolim near Goa. In 1593 Rudolf was beatified by the Church, and is now known as the Blessed Rudolf Aquaviva. Akbar, when he heard of this untoward end of the Father, exclaimed 'Ah me, Father. Did I not tell you not to go away? But you would not listen to me.' He loved him, says Monserrate, not because he himself wished

to become a Christian, but because he recognised the intense conviction of the Father in the truth of his own religion and his desire to bring others to his own way of life. Thus ended the First Jesuit Mission to the Court of Akbar.

*Second Jesuit Mission from Goa* : In 1590, Akbar for a second time renewed his intercourse with the Christians at Goa. This time he found a Greek sub-deacon named Leo Grimon to carry his message to the Provincial. "On this occasion," so ran the Emperor's *parwāna* addressed to his various provincial officers, who were asked to give safe conduct to the Christian envoy, "I am summoning the most learned and most virtuous of the Fathers that they may help me to a true knowledge of the Christian law and of the royal high-ways by which they travel to the presence of God. I, therefore, command my officers aforesaid to bestow great honour and favour both on Dom Leo Grimon and on the Fathers for whom I am sending. . . . ." To the Fathers of the Society, he wrote :—

"In the name of God. The exalted and invincible Akbar to those who are in God's grace and have tasted of His Holy Spirit and to those that are obedient to the Spirit of the Messiah and lead men to God. I say to you learned Fathers, whose words are heeded as those of men retired from the world, who have left the pomps and honours of earth : Fathers who walk by the true way ; I would have your Reverences know that I have knowledge of all the faiths of the world both of various kinds of heathen and of the Muhammedans, save that of Jesus Christ which is from God and as such recognised and followed by many. Now, in that, I feel great inclination to the friendship of the Fathers, I desire that I may be taught by them the Christian law. There has recently come to my court and royal palace one Dom Leo Grimon, a person of great merit and good discourse, whom I have questioned on sundry matters, and who has answered well to the satisfaction of myself and my doctors. He has assured me that there are in India (Portuguese) several Fathers of great prudence and learning, and if this be so, your Reverences will be able, immediately on receiving my letter, to send me some of them to my Court with all confidence, so that in disputations with my doctors I may compare their several learning and character, and see the superiority of the Fathers over my doctors, . . . And who by this means may be taught to know the truth. If they will remain in my Court, I shall build them such lodging that they may live in greater honour and favour than any Father who has up to this been in this country and when they wish to leave I shall let them depart with honour. You should, therefore, do as I ask of you in this letter. Written at the commencement of the moon of June."



The Provincial, accordingly, sent two Portuguese Fathers, Edward Leiton (Leitanus) and Christopher di Vega, with an assistant, who were received in Lahore in 1591. The Provincial's report to his Superior, dated November 1591, mentions, 'This embassy induced many, not only of the Fathers, but also of the students, to apply to be sent on the Mission, and there were chosen for the purpose two Fathers and a companion who reached the Emperor's Court in 1591, and were received with great kindness. Every kind of favour was shown to them in the palace itself, necessities were supplied, and a school was started in which the sons of the nobles and the Emperor's own sons (Murad and Daniyal) and grandson (Khusru) were taught to read and write Portuguese. 'But when the Fathers saw that the Emperor had not decided as they expected, they proposed to return to Goa, but were bidden by me not to do so ..... And as the conversion of the Emperor to the Catholic Faith is a matter of the greatest moment, it is necessary to proceed skilfully and justly in the matter.' But, as Smith observes, "No printed record explains how, why, or exactly when the Mission came to an abrupt conclusion. Its members were recalled and returned to Goa, some time in 1592.... The suspicion seems justifiable that the Fathers selected were not in all respects the right persons for the task entrusted to them, and that they might have been somewhat faint-hearted. Thus closed the Second Mission like the First, in disappointment and failure."

*Third Jesuit Mission from Goa :* In 1594 Akbar, for the third time, desired the Portuguese Viceroy at Goa to send a party of learned Christians to him. The message was conveyed by an Armenian Christian. But the Provincial, being very much disappointed by the results of the first two missions, was not inclined to comply with the request. The Viceroy, however, thought differently. He hoped for "*good results not merely of a religious but also of a political character.*" So it was finally decided to send a Mission. Father Jerome Xavier, a grand-nephew of St. Francis Xavier, Father Emmanuel Pinheiro and Brother Benedict de Goes were selected for the purpose. "They were, each in his own line, men of outstanding competence." The first had seen much service in India and had held positions of trust. For twenty years he was to remain at the Mughal Court, "*working sometimes for the conversion of Emperors, and*

*sometimes for the material advancement of the Portuguese.*" In the end he too returned to Goa and died there in June 1617. The second, according to Maclagan, "seems to have been the first of the Jesuits in Mogor to turn his attention seriously to the people rather than the Court." He remained for many years at Lahore as pastor of a large congregation, and at the same time enjoyed much favour and influence with Akbar. He returned to Goa in 1615, and only four years later 'he departed hence to a better Mission.' Brother Benedict seemed little interested in the Court of the Mughal, and distinguished himself by undertaking a Mission from Lahore to China, in 1603. He died there in 1604.

On 3 December 1594, the party left Goa, sailing *via* Daman to Cambay. Thence they proceeded through the desert of Rajputāna, and after five months reached Lahore on 5 May 1595. From this time to the death of Akbar, in 1605, there are two batches of Jesuit letters giving valuable information. The Indian sources for this period are scanty, and throw little light on the subject of Akbar's relations with the Christians. Badāuni's account stops with 1595 and Abu-l Faḍl's with 1602. Father Jerome Xavier, the head of the Mission was in attendance on Akbar all the last ten years of the Emperor's life. He also accompanied Akbar during his Deccan campaign. Like its predecessors, this Mission was also well received at Lahore.

Father Pinheiro states in his letter of September 1595, "Both Emperor and Prince (Salim) favoured us and treated us with much kindness and I observed that he paid to none of his own people as much attention as he paid to us, for he desired us to sit in turn upon the cushion on which he and the Prince alone were wont to sit." On 20 August the same year, Father Jerome Xavier also wrote, "He (Akbar) received us publicly with great honour and kindness and whenever he sees us he maintains the same attitude towards us and has us near him among the chief lords of the Court...He has images of our Lord Christ and of the blessed Virgin which are of the best kind of those which are brought from Europe and he keeps them with respect and reverence. He evinces the greatest pleasure in showing them to others, holding them in arms for a long time in spite of fatigue which their size entails....He sent very costly gold and silk clothes, wherewith his servants handsomely adorned our chapel.....The Emperor gave us leave to bring together as many as might so wish to join the church of Christ."

He allowed them to start a school which was attended by the sons of some of the feudatory Princes and those of the Chief of

Badakshahān. Two of these pupils asked to become Christians and one even wished to be admitted to Orders. The question of a site for a church at Lahore was mooted and a church was ultimately built. It was opened in 1597 while Akbar was in Kashmir and the Governor of the city attended in person, remaining for some two hours conversing with Father Pinheiro in his house. At the following Christmas, Brother Benedict de Goes prepared a sacred Crib which was much admired. The Royal Princes followed Akbar's example in their attention to the Fathers and one of them went so far as to present a large candle to be burnt in honour of Christ and the Virgin, accompanying his gift with liberal alms for the poor. The heir apparent himself, Prince Salim, became a firm friend and protector of the Mission.

When Akbar went to Kashmir in May, as above referred to, he took with him both Father Xavier and Brother Goes. They stayed till November 1597. During their stay a great famine raged in the valley, and the Father baptised many orphans that had been left in the streets to die. After their return both the Father and Brother suffered for about two months from fever. They had spent altogether two and a half years at the Court of Akbar with no encouraging result, so far as their main purpose was concerned. In 1598 the King of Spain wrote to his Viceroy at Goa that, although the Fathers had not yet produced any fruit, the Mission should not be allowed to expire, and ordered that, if the Fathers should die or have to be recalled, their places should be filled. 'The fruit,' he wrote, 'which has hitherto not shown itself, may appear whenever God pleaseth and when hopes are perhaps the smallest.' But the Fathers got exasperated with Akbar's attitude. Akbar explained to them courteously that, whereas former rulers would have tried to suppress them, he had allowed them every liberty in his dominions.

The Fathers accompanied Akbar during his southern campaign. When he found himself confronted with the difficult siege of Asīr-garh, Akbar asked the Jesuits to procure the assistance of the Portuguese authorities at Goa. But Xavier refused on the plea that *such action was contrary to the Christian faith*. Du Jarrie, however, points out that *the Father must also have been influenced by the fact that the Khāndesh forces against whom Akbar was fighting were*

*in alliance with the Portuguese.* This, therefore, enraged Akbar against the Jesuits whose objection seemed to him mere casuistry. For a time, until his wrath subsided, the Fathers withdrew from his presence.

Asirgarh fell in January 1601. The Jesuits have given their own account of some of its details. "Whatever the truth as regards these incidents may be," says Maclagan, "the main point of interest to the Jesuits was that when the fort fell seven renegade Portuguese officers, who were captured among the defenders and were about to be subjected to cruel treatment, were, at Father Xavier's request, handed over to him and were by him reconverted to Christianity." Then Father Pinheiro arrived from Lahore, and he with Father Xavier went into the presence of the King who received them with much kindness, laying his hand on Pinheiro's shoulder ('which he does not do save to his great captains and his special favourites'). Akbar returned to Agra in May 1601 together with Fathers Xavier and Pinheiro.

Before his return, however, he had sent an embassy to Goa, for the fourth time, but only for a secular purpose. In this letter dated 20 March 1601, Akbar requested not for priests, but for a political alliance, skilled craftsmen, precious stones, etc. The Portuguese authorities exhibited all their ammunition to the ambassador and fired a demonstration salvo out of their heavy ordnance, but nothing more came out of the embassy.

In the following year, with the arrival of two other missionaries, Goes and Machado, the Jesuit Fathers at the Mughal Court formed a sort of 'College' or monastery. Now they succeeded in securing from Akbar, despite much opposition, notably from Mirza Aziz Koka, a written sanction under the Royal Seal expressly permitting such of his subjects as desired to embrace Christianity to do so without let or hindrance. Fifty Portuguese captives, who were held to ransom by Akbar, were also released and well treated by the intercession of the Fathers. 'My lord,' said Xavier, 'you have liberated fifty captives, and in so doing you have made fifty thousand Portuguese your servants.'

In spite of these cordialities, the Portuguese Fathers suffered much hostility from some of the orthodox Muslim nobles, but more particularly on account of the intrigues of other Europeans who were

now gathering up at the Court of the Grand Mughal. Consequently, in 1605, when Akbar lay on his death-bed, the Jesuits were not allowed to be by his side. Their account of the happenings is thus given by du Jarric :—

'The Fathers, who had full information of the King's sickness, went on a Saturday to see him in the hope that he would hear the words which, after long thought and having commended the matter to God, they had prepared for this hour. But they found him amongst his Captains, and in so cheerful and merry a mood, that they deemed the time unsuitable for speaking to him of the end of this life, and decided to await another opportunity. They came away fully persuaded that he was making good progress...On the Monday following, however, it was reported on all sides that.....His Majesty was dying. On hearing this the Fathers went to the palace ; but they could find no one who could make their arrival known to the King, or dare to speak to him of them ; for already such matters were more in the hands of the great nobles than of the King himself ; and hence every means by which the Fathers tried to gain entrance was ineffectual.'

*Akbar and the English :* Direct intercourse between England and India began as early as October 1579 when Father Thomas Stevens, a Jesuit from Oxford, arrived in Goa. He remained there for forty years, studied Konkani, wrote its grammar, and also a book of verses containing 11,000 strophes of high literary merit. His letters to England stimulated much interest in that country about India. Consequently, in 1581, a company of English merchants started with a Charter from Elizabeth, and two years later sent John Newbury, a London merchant, on the first British mercantile adventure to India. William Leedes, a jeweller, and James Story, a painter, and Ralph Fitch, another London merchant, accompanied Newbury. At Goa they were imprisoned as heretics and obtained release on bail, with considerable difficulty, owing to the good offices of Father Stevens. James Story alone was welcomed by the Jesuits as an artist capable of painting their Church. He settled down in Goa, married a half-caste girl, opened a shop, and gave up all thought of returning to Europe. His three companions escaped secretly, visited Belgaum, Bijapur, Golkonda, Masulipatam, Burhānpur, Māndu, and went to Agra *via* Mālwa and Rajputāna, 'passing many rivers, which by reason of the rain were so swollen that we waded and swam often times for our lives.' Fitch was the only member of this party that returned to Europe ; he reached London in 1591. The others were

never heard of again. Fitch has left some interesting impressions of his visit to Fathpur Sikri and Agra :—

"Agra," he writes, "is a very great citie, and populous, built with stone, having faire and large streets, with a faire river running by it, which falls into the gulf of Bengala. It hath a faire castle and a strong, with a very faire ditch. Here be many Moors and Gentiles, the king is called Zelabdin (Jalalu-d din) Echbar : the people for the most part call him the great Mogor.

"From thence wee went for Fatepore, which is the place where the king kept his court. The towne is greater than Agra, but the houses and streets be not so faire. Here dwell many people both Moores and Gentiles (Muhammadans and Hindus).

"The king hath in Agra and Fatepore as they doe credibly report 1,000 elephants, thirtie thousand horses, 1,400 tame deere, 800 concubines; such store of Ounces (cheetah ?), Tigers, Buffles (buffaloes kept for fighting), Cocks and Haukes, that is very strange to see.

"He kept a great Court, which they call Dericcan.

"Agra and Fatepore are two very great cities, either of them much greater than London and very populous.\* Between Agra and Fatepore are 12 miles (*kos* ?—23 miles) and all the way is a market of victuals and other things, as full as though a man were still in a towne, arfd so many people as if a man were in a market.

"They have many fine cartes, and many of them carved and gilded with gold, with two wheelles, which be drawn with two litle Buls about the bignesse of our great dogs in England. Hither is great resort merchants from Persia and out of India, and very much merchandise of silke and cloth, and of precious stones, both Rubies, Diamants and Pearles. The king is appparelled in a white Cabie, made like a shirt tied with strings on the one side, and a little cloth on his head coloured often times with red or yellow. None come into his house but his eununches which keep his women."

The next Englishman to come to India was John Mildenhall or Midnall, who bore a letter from Queen Elizabeth to Akbar, requesting liberty to trade in his dominions on terms as good as those enjoyed by the Portuguese. No text of the letter is extant. Mildenhall who was a merchant, sailed from London on 12 February 1599. He made his way to Lahore, early in 1603, by the land route *via* Kandahār. He brought to the Emperor 29 good horses, some of which cost £50 or 60 each. He stated his case before the council of ministers, and also asked the Emperor not to take offence if the English should cap-

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\* The population of London in 1580 was 123,034, and 152,478 between 1593-5. The population of Fathpur Sikri, according to Smith, may have been about 200,000 in 1585.

ture Portuguese ships or ports on his coasts. Some days later Akbar presented him with gifts worth £500, which put the Jesuits 'in an exceeding great rage.' They began to denounce Englishmen as thieves and spies. In six months time "the Jesuits bought over Akbar's two principal ministers with bribes of at least £500 each, and enticed away the Armenian interpreter of the envoy, who was obliged to work hard studying Persian for six months in order to be able to speak for himself." When Akbar heard the case against the Jesuits, he granted a *firmān* to Mildenhall. "The discomfiture of the Jesuits," says Smith, "must have taken place in August or September 1605, after the reconciliation with Salim and shortly before Akbar's fatal illness, which began late in September."

Mildenhall's negotiations perhaps were responsible for the decision taken a few years later to send Sir Thomas Roe as the duly accredited ambassador of James I. Not until August 1608, however, did the first English vessel, *Hector* call at the port of Surat. The Englishmen who visited India during Akbar's life-time were only pioneers unconscious of the great good fortune which lay in store for their country in the future.

The Dutch had come to India, but they confined their activities to the coasts of India and never cared to visit either the Court or the capital of Akbar.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

- 1558-9 Akbar's annexation of Gwalior and Jaunpur. Ali Adil Shāh and Rāma Rāya of Vijayanagar invade Ahmednagar territories.
- 1560 Portuguese domination on the Konkan coast. Akbar becomes independent of Bairām Khān. Adham Khān's revolt in Mālwa suppressed.
- 1561 Bairām Khān assassinated at Pātan. Baz Bahādur defeated by Adham Khān in Mālwa.
- 1562 Baz Bahādur recovers Mālwa. Adham Khān killed by Akbar for murdering his *vezir* Shams-ud-dīn M. Atgah. Akbar's first Rajput marriage. War between Bijapur and Vijayanagara.
- 1563 Revolt of Abdullah Khān in Mālwa.
- 1564 Attempt on Akbar's life at Delhi. Shakespeare born.
- 1565 Battle of Tālikota (Rakkastangadi); Vijayanagara overthrown by the Muslim powers in the Deccan. Abolition of *jizya* by Akbar. Mysore becomes independent under Vira Chāmarāja Wodeyar. Khān Zamān's rebellion.

- A.D.
- 1566 Mirza M. Hākim's revolt. The revolt of the Mirzas at Sāmbhal.
- 1567 Khān Zamān's rebellion suppressed by Akbar. Rāma Rāya's brother Venkatādri establishes himself at Chandragiri.
- 1568 Sack of Chitor by Akbar.
- 1569 Akbar takes Rantambhor and Kālinjar. Birth of Salim (Jahāngir).
- 1570 Mālwa reconquered from Baz Bahādur.
- 1572 Akbar's Gujarat expedition ; receives crown from Muzāffar III. Ali Shāh Chak proclaims Akbar Emperor in Kashmir. Rāṇa Pratāp succeeds Udai Singh of Mewar (in exile).
- 1573 Suppression of revolt in Gujarat ; Akbar's system of administration definitely planned. Accession of Dāud in Bengal. Submission of Mārwar (Jodhbai married to Akbar).
- 1574 Akbar conquers Upper Sind. Guru Amardās succeeded by Guru Rāmdas ; Amritsar built. Dāud's revolt in Bengal. Tulsi Dās begins his *Rāmcharita-Mānas*.
- 1575 Dāud's defeat at Tukaroi : Akbar proclaimed in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Todar Mal's *bandobast* in Gujarat.
- 1576 Rāṇa Pratāp defeated at Haldighāt (Gogunda) ; final overthrow and execution of Dāud in Bengal.
- 1579 Akbar's religious supremacy and innovations : *Din Ilāhi* ; First Jesuit Mission.
- 1581 Guru Arjun succeeds Rādās : *Granth-sāhib* collated. Year of crisis for Akbar : rebellions all over.
- 1582 Todar Mal's system in Bengal.
- 1586 Death of Birbal. Rāṇa Pratāp partially recovers Mewar ; foundation of Udaipur ; Kashmir annexed.
- 1589 Akbar visits Kabul. Death of Bhagwān Dās and Todar Mal. Rāja Mān Singh appointed governor of Bengal. English merchants petition Elizabeth for permission to trade.
- 1590 Second Jesuit Mission.
- 1591-2 Annexation of Sind and Orissa with India.
- 1594 Third Jesuit Mission.
- 1595-6 Surrender of Kandahār to Akbar. Chānd Bibī's heroic defence of Ahmednagar. Death of Faizi and Badāuni. Decline of Portuguese power.
- 1597 Death of Rāṇa Pratāp. Amar Singh succeeds.
- 1598 Akbar leaves for the Deccan.
- 1599 Death of Chānd Bibī (Ahmednagar).
- 1600 Fall of Asirgarh (Khāndesh). Elizabeth's charter to the London Company.
- 1601-4 Prince Salim's revolt ; Murder of Abu-l Faḍl.
- 1603 Mildenhall at Agra ; Jesuits traduce the English. Death of Queen Elizabeth and accession of James I. Plot to supersede Salim.
- 1604 Submission of Malik Ambar. Dutch factories established in S. India.
- 1605 Death of Akbar ; accession of Jahāngir.



## CHAPTER XIII

### REORGANISATION OF THE EMPIRE

Those who take up the sword have only one justification, *viz.*, seeking the welfare of the people coming under their sway and not merely extension of dominion. Sher Shāh had tried to rule according to this principle, and though Providence had given him no worthy heir to ensure its continuance, his good work did not perish with him. Akbar carried forward the policy which the enemy of his house had inaugurated. He strove to achieve what might be called the true aims of a benevolent autocracy. In the words of Abu-l Faḍl, 'It is universally agreed that the noblest employments are the reformation of the manners of the people ; the advancement of agriculture ; the regulation of the officers ; and the discipline of the army. And these desirable ends are not to be attained without studying to please the people, joined with good management of finances, and an exact economy in the management of the State. But when all these are kept in view, every class of people enjoys prosperity.' Akbar sought to achieve these ends, and his administration, as Moreland has pointed out, was "severely practical." A chief or *rāja* who submitted and agreed to pay a reasonable revenue, therefore, was commonly allowed to retain his position of authority. His administrative system, nevertheless, favoured direct relations between the State and the individual peasant, the assessment and collection of revenue being controlled from the centre, and the officers having to account in detail for all receipts. It was in fact a centralised monarchy acting through a bureaucratic machinery ; all the strings of the government were in the Emperor's own hands and controlled by him directly. Yet, for the sake of administrative convenience, there were the usual Departments : Military, Revenue, Justice and Religion. Prof. (Sir) J. N. Sarkar has given the following description of them in his *Mughal Administration* :—

## CENTRAL GOVERNMENT :

'The chief Departments of the Mughal administration were :—

1. The Exchequer and Revenue (under the High *Diwan*).
2. The Imperial Household (under the *Khān-i-sāmān*).
3. The Military Pay and Accounts Office (under the Imperial *Bakshi*).
4. Canon Law, both Civil and Criminal (under the Chief *Qazi*).
5. Religious Endowments and Charity (under the Chief *Sadr*).
6. Censorship of Public Morals (under the *Muhtasib*).

'Inferior to these, but ranking almost like the Departments, were :

7. The Artillery (under the *Mir Atish* or *Darogha-i-toph-khāna*).

8. Intelligence and Posts (under the *Darogha* of *Dakchauki*).

'The innumerable *Kārkhānas* (i.e., factories and stores), each under a *darogha* or superintendent, were not Departments. Most of them were under the *Khān-i-sāmān*.'

1. *The Charicellor* : The highest officer next to the Emperor was called the *Wazir* or *Vakil*. He was the Prime-Minister or Chancellor of the Empire, and under the later Mughals he exercised dictatorial authority, like the Mayors of the Palace in medieval France, or the Peshwas in India. He was always the *Diwan* as well, and in this capacity the head of the Revenue Department. Like every great officer of the Mughal Government, he was expected to command an army, and often did lead a short expedition ; but the necessity of his constant attendance on the Emperor prevented him from taking charge of the military operations for a long time or at a distance from the Imperial camp. 'Thus, in its origin the *Wazir's* post was a civil one, and his assumption of the supreme military direction was abnormal and a mark of Imperial decadence.'

2. *The Bakshi or Pay-Master* : Almost all officers of any rank being enrolled, at least in theory, as military commanders, their salaries were calculated in terms of the contingents under them and passed by the Pay-Master of the Army. This officer at a later time was called the *Mir* or First *Bakshi* when he had under him three others, respectively called the Second, Third, and Fourth

*Bakshis.* Greater particulars of this Department will be considered later.

3. *The Khān-i-sāmān or High Steward* : This important officer was the head of the Imperial household. According to Manucci, "He had charge of the whole expenditure of the royal household in reference to both great and small things." All the personal staff of the Emperor was under his control, and he also supervised the Emperor's daily expenditure (e.g. food, tents, stores, etc.). Often *Wazirs* were chosen from among the *Khān-i-sāmāns*.

4. *The Qazi-ul-quzat or Chief Judge* : This 'Qazi of the Imperial Camp', as he was also designated, made all the appointments of local *qazis* in various parts of the Empire.

5. *The Sadr-us-sudur or Chief Sadr* : This officer was the Chief Civil Judge and Supervisor of the Endowments of land made by the Emperor or Princes, for the support of pious men, scholars and monks. 'It was his duty to see that such grants were applied to the right purpose and also to scrutinise applications for fresh grants. . . . The *Sadr* was also the Emperor's almoner and had the spending of the vast sums which the Emperors set apart for charity in the month of Ramzān and other holy occasions,—amounting to 1½ lakhs of rupees in the reign of Aurangzeb, and at Court ceremonies. Like the Chief *Qazi*, he also made the appointments of the local *Sadr*. For this post, men of the best Arabic scholarship and sanctity of life were selected.

6. *Muhtasib or Censor of Public Morals* : His duties were to see that Muslims led lives according to the Prophet's commands, and did not indulge in forbidden things. A part of the instructions issued to the Censor ran—'In the cities do not permit the sale of intoxicating drinks, nor the residence of 'professional women (*tawaiif*, dancing-girls), as it is opposed to the Sacred Law. Give good counsel and warning to those who violate the Quranic precepts. Do not show harshness (at first), for then they would give you trouble. First send advice to the leaders of these people, and if they do not listen to you, then report the case to the Governor.'

#### PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION :

'The administrative agency in the provinces of the Mughal Empire,' observes Sarkar, 'was an exact miniature of that of the Central Government.' The Governor was officially called the *Nizām*, but

popularly known as the *Subāhdār*. The administration was concentrated at the provincial capital. Touch with the villages was maintained by (i) the *fauzdār*, (ii) the revenue collectors, (iii) *zamindār*'s visits to the *subāhdār* (iv) the tours of the *subāhdār* himself. But in spite of all this the villagers led their own peaceful life under their local *pañchāyat* administration, undisturbed for the most part by what took place in the rest of the world.

The duties of the principal provincial officers were as follows :—

1. *The Subāhdār* : His chief function was to maintain order in his province, to assist the collection of revenue, and to execute the Imperial *firmāns* sent to him. He also collected the tribute due from the vassal princes in the neighbourhood of his jurisdiction. The instructions issued to a new *subāhdār*, though they look like counsels of perfection, were : 'He ought to keep all classes of men pleased by good behaviour, and to see that the strong may not oppress the weak. He should keep all the oppressors down... the *subāhdār* should take care to recommend only worthy officials for promotion... and every month send two despatches to Court by *dāk-chauki* reporting the occurrences of the province.

'When you are appointed, you should engage a good *diwan*,—a trustworthy and experienced man who has already done work in the service of some high grandee,—and a *munshi* (secretary) with similar ability and experience. You should secure a trustworthy mediator or friend (*wasilah*) at Court to report promptly to the Emperor and take his orders on any affair of the province on which you may write to His Majesty.....

'Encourage the ryots to extend the cultivation and carry on agriculture with all their heart. Do not screw everything out of them. Remember that the ryots are permanent (i.e., the only permanent source of income to the State). Conciliate the *zamindārs* with presents ; it is cheaper to keep them in hand thus than to repress them with troops.'

2. *The Provincial Diwan* : He was the second officer in the province, and 'the rival of the *subāhdār*.' The two kept jealous and strict watch over each other. The provincial *Diwan* was appointed by the Imperial officer of the same name, and was in constant correspondence with him. He was specially charged to increase the cultivation and select only honest men for the post of

*amīn*. Twice every month he was to report to the High *Diwan* the occurrences of the *subāh* with a statement of the cash balance with him. 'The *Diwan* was specially urged to appoint as collectors (*kroris* and *tahsildārs*) practical men who were likely to induce the *ryots* to pay the government-dues of their own accord, without the necessity of resorting to harshness or chastisement' (*Manual*, 13—14). The *sanad* of appointment ran : 'Cause the extension of cultivation and habitation in the villages. Watch over the Imperial treasury, that nobody may draw any money without due warrant. When due money is paid into the treasury from the chests of the *jotādars* and other sources, give receipts (*quaz-ul-wasul*) to their agents. See that no official (*āmīl*) exacts any forbidden cess (*abwāb*).

"At the end of every agricultural season ascertain from the original (rough) papers the extortions and peculations of the *āmils* and recover for the Imperial treasury whatever may be due from them on this account. Report bad or dishonest *āmils* to Government (i.e., to the High *Diwan*) so that better men may be appointed to replace them.

"If any *āmīl* has let arrears (of revenue) accumulate for many years, you should collect the due amount from the villages in question by *easy instalments* at the rate of 5 per cent. every season. The *taqavī* loan given last year by Government should be realised in the first season of the present year. If they fail to pay or delay payment, Government will compel the *Diwan* and the *āmīl* to make the amount good. Send the papers of your Department to the Imperial Record Office according to the regulations."

3. *The Faujdār* : The *faujdārs* were assistants of the *subāhdār* in the maintenance of peace and the discharge of all his executive duties. Each *faujdār* was in charge of a division or district of the province. The following instructions were issued to them :—

'A *faujdār* should be brave and *polite* in dealing with his soldiers. He should enlist in his contingent of armed retainers only men of known bravery and good family....

'Keep up your practice in the exercise of all weapons of war, in hunting and in riding horses, so as to keep yourself in a fit condition and to be able to take the field promptly (when called upon to march to a scene of disturbance.) Do justice to the oppressed. (*Manual*, 34—36).

'Destroy the forts of lawless men and rebel chiefs as the best means of punishing them. Guard the roads, protect the revenue-payers. Assist and give (armed) support to the *gumāshthas* (agents) of the *jāgirdārs* (in the case of military chiefs) and the *kroris* (in the case of Crown-lands) at the time of collecting the revenue.

'Forbid the blacksmiths to manufacture matchlocks. Urge the *thānādārs* (men in command of the outposts or smaller areas within a *faujdar*), whom you appointed under yourself, to take complete possession of their charges, to abstain from dispossessing the people from their rightful property and from levying any forbidden cess (*abwāb*).'

4. *The Kotwāl* : The *kotwāl* was the most important of the local officers. He was a man of all work, from the inspection of prisoners to the observance of the *Ilāhi* era and the various festivals by the people ; from the maintenance of the safety of the roads to the regulation of the markets ; from the inspection of weights and measures to the prevention of vice, and even wasteful extravagance by private individuals, 'because when a man spends in excess of his income it is certain that he is doing something wrong.' He was also charged to keep census of the houses and inhabitants in his jurisdiction, to keep an eye over visitors and foreigners coming in and going out, to maintain a body of informers to keep in touch with the daily and hourly happenings, etc, etc. No wonder, therefore, Abu-l Faḍl lays down—'The appropriate person for this office should be vigorous, experienced, active, deliberate, patient, astute, and humane. His duties are thus described in the *Ain-i-Akbārī* :—

"Through his watchfulness and night-patrolling the citizens should enjoy the repose of security, and the evil-disposed lie in the slough of non-existence. He should keep a register of houses, and frequented roads, and engage the citizens in a pledge of reciprocal assistance, and bind them to a common participation of weal and woe. He should form a quarter by the union of a certain number of inhabitants, and name intelligent subordinates for its superintendence and receive a daily report under his seal of those who enter or leave it, and of whatever events therein occur. And he should appoint as a spy one among the obscure residents with whom the others should have no acquaintance, and keeping their reports in writing, employ a heedful scrutiny. . . . He should minutely observe the income and expenditure of the various classes of men and by *refined address, make his vigilance reflect honour on his administration*. Of every guild of artificers, he should name one as guild-master, and another as broker, by whose intelligence the business of purchase and sale should be conducted. From these he should

require frequent reports. When the night is a little advanced, he should prohibit people from entering and leaving the city. He should set the idle to some handicraft. . . . . He should discover thieves and the goods they have stolen or be responsible for the loss. He should so direct that no one shall demand a tax or cess save on arms, elephants, horses, cattle, camels, sheep, goats and merchandise. In every *subāh*, a slight impost shall be levied at an appointed place. Old coins should be given in to be melted down or consigned to the treasury as bullion. He should suffer no alteration in the value of the gold and silver coin of the realm, and its diminution by wear in circulation he shall recover to the value of the deficiency. *He should use his discretion in the reduction of prices and not allow purchases to be made outside the city.* The rich shall not take beyond what is necessary for their consumption. He shall examine the weights and make the *ser* not more nor less than 30 *dāms*. In the *gaz*. . . . . he should permit neither decrease nor increase, and *restrain the people from the making, the dispensing, the buying or selling of wine, but refrain from invading the privacy of domestic life.* Of the property of a deceased or missing person who may have no heir, he shall make an inventory and keep it in his care. He should reserve separate ferries and wells for men and women. He should appoint persons of respectable character to supply the public water-courses; and prohibit women from riding horses. *He should direct that no ox or buffalo or horse, or camel be slaughtered, and forbid the restriction of personal liberty and the selling of slaves. He should not suffer a woman to be burnt against her inclination, nor a criminal deserving of death to be impaled, nor any one to be circumcised under the age of twelve, etc., etc.*

5. *News Reporters* : There were four kinds of news reporters : (i) the *wakai-navis* ; (ii) the *sawarik-nigar* ; (iii) the *khufia-navis* ; and (iv) the *harkarah*. The first was the regular reporter posted with the army, in the provinces, and in all the towns ; the latter were appointed either occasionally or regularly, to make sure that the *wakai-navises* sent correct news. The news letters were sent to the *darogha-dākchauki*, i.e., Superintendent of Posts and Intelligence, who handed them unopened to the *Wazir* to be placed before the Emperor. 'These four classes of public intelligencers acted under the orders of this *Darogha* who was their official superior and protector. Sometimes an irate governor would publicly insult or beat the local news-writer for a report against himself and then the *Darogha* would take up the cause of his subordinate, and get the offending governor punished.' The arrangement was that '*wakai* should be sent once a week, *sawarih* twice and the *akhbar*, of *harkarahs* once (? a month) and the despatches in cylinders (*nalo*) from the *nazim* and the *diwan* twice every month, in addition to urgent matters (which are to be reported immediately).

6. *Revenue Collectors* : (i) The *Krori* or 'collector of State dues' was the real collector of revenue. The arrangement was first introduced by Akbar (*Ain.*, i, p. 13), and signified an officer in charge of a district which was expected to yield a revenue of one *Kror* of *Dāms* ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs of rupees). Later on the name was applied even to other collectors of state dues like the *kroris* of *ganj* or collectors of markets. The *sanad* of appointment read :—

'Collect the revenue season by season as assessed by the *amin*, and pay it to the *fotadār*. With the advice of the *faujdār* and *amin*, carefully deposit the money in the Imperial treasury, giving a receipt for it to the *fotadār*. Send to the Government Record Office your abstract of accounts and statements of income and disbursements and other papers, as laid down in the regulations.' The regulations were :—

'The *krori* ought to entertain a body of militia (*sekbandi*) proportionate to his jurisdiction and collect the revenue without negligence and at the right time. He should not demand *mashal* (the state due in cash or kind) from places not yet capable of paying, lest their ryots should run away. *He should urge his subordinates not to realise anything in excess of the regulations, lest* he should in the end be subject to *wasilat* (examination of accounts with a view to detect peculation). He should be honest. (*Manual*, p. 66).'

(ii) The *Amin*, and the *Qanungo* as his name implies, was an umpire between the State demanding revenue and the individual *ryot* paying the same. According to the *Manual of the Duties of officers*, 'The *amin*'s work is to cause the kingdom to be cultivated. Before the season of cultivation, he should take from the *qanungoes* the preceding ten years' papers of the revenue assessment and area of the villages, ride to the villages in company with the *kroris*, *chaudharies*, *qanungoes* and *zamindārs*, inquire into the condition of the villages, as regards their (cultivable) area and the actual number of ploughs, compare the areas given in the papers of the *qanungo* with the real area, and if the two do not agree, call upon the *qanungo* to explain, and censure the headmen (in the case of shortage).....Then enquire whether the existing ploughs are sufficient for the cultivators of the village. If not, then grant *taqavi* (agricultural loans)....for the purchase of oxen and seeds, taking bonds from the headmen for the recovery of the loan with the first instalment of the next year's



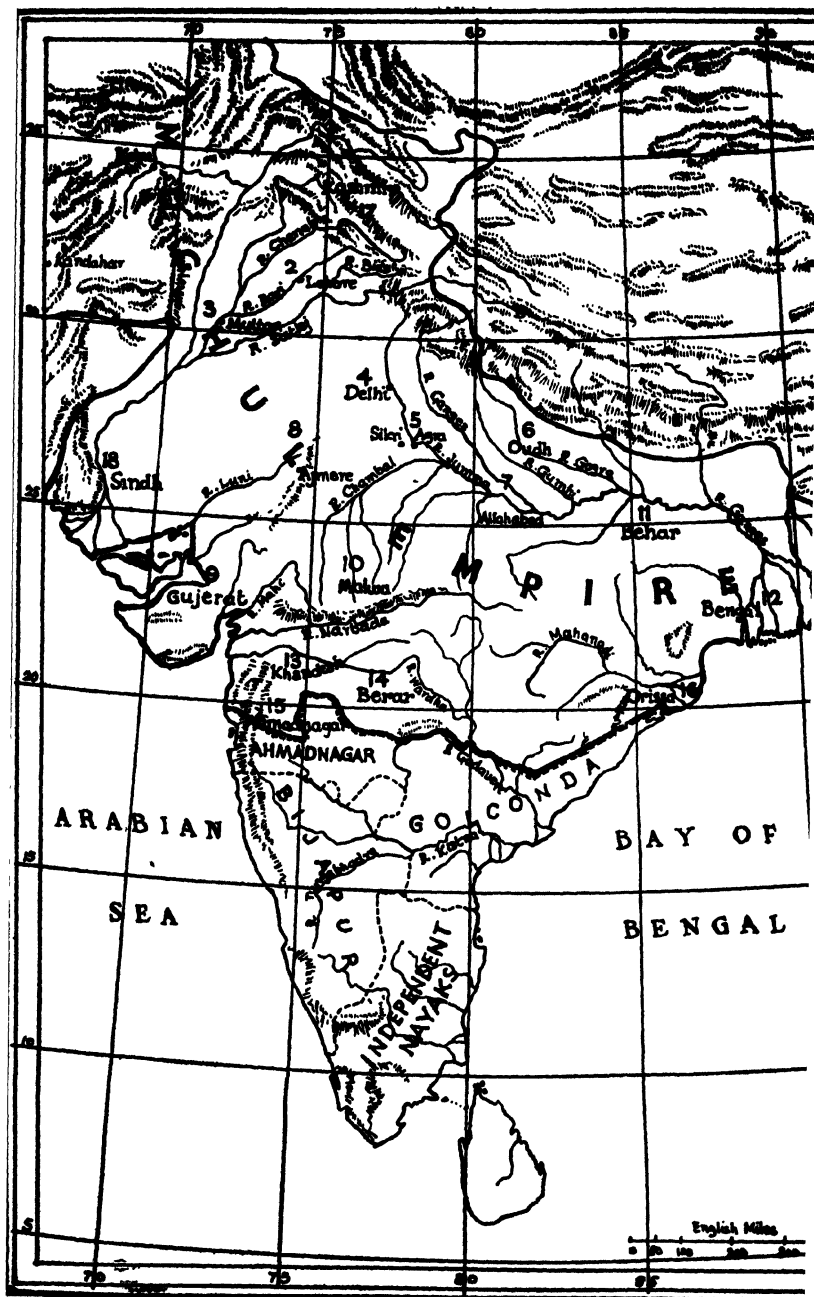
revenue, and indemnity-bonds from the *kroris* that they would realise the loan with the first instalment of the next year.'

The *Qanungo* was the living dictionary of the *qanūn* or regulations regarding land. He kept registers of the value, tenure, extent, and transfers of lands, reporting deaths and successions of revenue-payers, and explaining when required, local practices and public regulations. The *Manual* states, 'The Emperor's business goes on in reliance on your papers. To your office belong the papers of division, comparison, etc.....Keep two copies of the records,—one in your house and the other in your office (in charge of your *gumāshthas*) so that one at least may be saved in case of fire or flood.'

*Fifteen Subāhs* : The *Ain-i-Akbari* relates, 'In the fortieth year of the Divine Era, His Majesty's dominions consisted of one hundred and five *Sarkārs* (divisions of a *Subāh* subdivided into 2737 townships). When the ten years' settlement (see below) of the revenue was made.....His Majesty apportioned the Empire into twelve divisions to each of which he gave the name of *Subāh* and distinguished them by the appellation of the tract of country or its capital city. These were Allahābad, Agra, Oudh, Ajmer, Ahmedābad, Bihar, Bengal, Delhi, Kabul, Lahore, Multan, Mālwa : and when Berar, Khāndesh, and Ahmednagar were conquered, their number was fixed at fifteen.' This is followed by a detailed description of the provinces, their boundaries, administration, products, etc.

#### AKBAR'S REVENUE SYSTEM :

Land Revenue was the principal source of income to the Empire. The other sources of Imperial revenue were customs, mint, inheritance, presents, monopolies, and indemnities. Its total, according to the *Ain*., amounted to 363 *krors* of *dāms* ; the land-revenue alone (from the 12 *subāhs* in 1579-80) was Rs. 90,744,000. Different systems obtained in different parts of the country before Akbar's conquest. Akbar's policy was directed towards reducing these to a common system. The task was a very difficult one. In 1570-71 Muzāffar Khān Turbāti and Rāja Todar Mal were asked to revise the land-revenue assessments according to estimates framed by local *qanungoes*, and checked by ten officers at the head-quarters. "Thus, for the first time since the establishment of the Mughal power, was the local knowledge of the old hereditary revenue officials employed in determining the amount of the State demand."



Mughal Empire in 1605 A. D.



*Todar Mal's Bandobast* : In 1573, Todar Mal made his famous systematic survey of all the lands in Gujarat, which became the basis of his later reforms known as Todar Mal's *Bandobast*. "There is no name in medieval history," says Lane-Poole, "more renowned in India to the present day than that of Todar Mal, and the reason is that nothing in Akbar's reforms more nearly touched the welfare of the people than the great financier's reconstruction of the revenue system." Two years later, in 1575-6, with the exception of Bengal, Bihar, and Gujarat, a fresh survey was carried out, and the Empire was divided into 182 equal fiscal units, each roughly yielding a revenue of a *kror* or *tankās* (?) or Rs. 250,000. Such a unit was made the charge of an officer called the *krori*, described above. This artificial system was too mathematically perfect to succeed in practice, and had soon to be discarded. Consequently, a fresh attempt at reform was made in 1579-80. This resulted in the division of the Empire into the 12 *subāhs* already referred to, and the introduction of the ten years' settlement. The history of these reforms is thus given in the *Ain-i-Akbari* :—

'When Khwāja Abdul Majid Asaf Khān was raised to the dignity of Prime Minister, the total revenue was taken at an estimation, and the assignments were increased as the caprice of the moment suggested. And because at that time the extent of the Empire was small, and there was a constant increase of dignities among the servants of the State, the variations were contingent on the extent of corruption and self-interest. When this great office devolved on Muzāffar Khān and Rāja Todar Mal, in the 15th year of the reign, a redistribution of the Imperial assessment was made through the *qanungoes*, and estimating the produce of the lands they made a fresh settlement. Ten *qanungoes* were appointed who collected the accounts from the provincial *qanungoes* and lodged them in the Imperial exchequer. Although this settlement was somewhat less than the preceding one, nevertheless there had been formerly a wide discrepancy between the estimates and the receipts.

'When through the prudent management of the Sovereign the Empire was enlarged in extent, it became difficult to ascertain each year the prices current and much inconvenience was caused by the delay. On the one hand the husbandman complained of excessive exactions, and, on the other, the holder of assigned lands was aggrieved on account of the revenue balances. His Majesty devised a remedy for these evils and in the discernment of his world-adorning mind fixed a settlement for ten years : the people were thus made contented and their gratitude was abundantly manifested. From the beginning of the 15th year of

the divine era to the 24th, an aggregate of the rates of collection was formed and a tenth of the total was fixed as the annual assessment ; but from the 20th to the 24th year the collections were accurately determined and the five former ones accepted on the authority of persons of probity. The best crops were taken into account in each year and the year of the most abundant harvest accepted.'

This measurement of land was preceded by a reform of the units of measurement ; the *gaz*, the *tanab* and the *bhiga*, were set and defined. 'When His Majesty had determined the *gaz*, the *tanab*, and the *bhiga*, in his profound sagacity he classified the lands and fixed a different revenue to be paid by each.

'*Polaj* is land which is annually cultivated for each crop in succession and is never allowed to lie fallow. *Parauti* is land left out of cultivation for a time that it may recover its strength. *Chachar* is land that has lain fallow for three or four years. *Banjar* is land uncultivated for five years and more.

'Of the two first kinds of land, there are three classes, good, middling and bad. They add together the produce of each sort, and a third of this represents the medium produce, one-third part of which is exacted as the royal due. The revenue levied by Sher Khān, *which at the present day is represented in all provinces as the lowest rate of assessment* generally obtained, and for the convenience of the cultivators and the soldiery, the value was taken in ready money.....

'His Majesty in his wisdom thus regulated the revenues in the above-mentioned favourable manner. He reduced the duty on manufactures from ten to five per cent. and two per cent. was divided between the *patwari* and the *qanungo*.....Many imports equal in amount to the income of Hindustan were remitted by His Majesty as a thanks offering to the Almighty. Among these were the following :—

'The capitation tax, the port duties, the pilgrim tax, the tax on various classes of artificers, *Darogha's* fees, *Tahasildar's* fees, market duties, passports, fees on the sale and purchase of a house, on salt made from nitrous earth,.....in fine all those imposts which the natives of Hindustan include under the term *Sair Jihat*, were remitted.

'When either from excessive rain or through an inundation, the land falls out of cultivation the husbandmen are, at first, in considerable distress. In the first year therefore but two-fifths of the produce is taken : in the second three-fifths : in the third four-fifths : and in the fifth the ordinary revenue. According to differences of situation the revenue is paid either in money or in kind. In the third year the charges of 5 per cent. and one *dām* for each *bigha* are added.'

#### THE ARMY AND FLEET :

We have stated above that the salaries of almost all important officers of the Empire were disbursed by the *Bakshi* or Pay-Master General of the Army. They were all enrolled, whatever the nature

of their actual duties, as military officers; and their status and emoluments were calculated in terms of the military contingents under them. "Though on several occasions," observes Prof. Sarkar, "we have officers invested with the title of *sipah-salar* or 'commander of troops,' it was only a mark of honour and they did not command the entire Mughal army. The Emperor was the only Commander-in-Chief." Abu-l Faql thus refers to the organisation of the Imperial army:

'His Majesty guides the Imperial army by his excellent advice and counsel, and checks in various ways attempts at insubordination. He has divided the army, on account of the multitude of the men, into several classes, and has thereby secured the peace of the country. The principal grades of officers and classes of troops were (1) *Mansabdārs*, (2) *Ahadis*, (3) *Dakhilis*, and (4) the Infantry.

(1) *Mansabdārs*. According to Abu-l Faql, the Emperor appointed the *Mansabdārs* 'from the *Dahbashi* (commander of ten) to the *Dah Hazari* (commander of ten thousand), limiting, however, all commands above 5000, to his august sons (or nobles of the highest rank).....

'The monthly grants made to the *Mansabdārs* varied according to the condition of their contingents. An officer whose contingent came up to his *mansab*, was put into the First Class of his rank; if his contingent was one half and upwards of his fixed number, he was put into the Second Class; the Third Class contained those contingents which were still less.'

The salaries were as follows:—

Rank : Commanders of—	Monthly Salary in Rupees.		
	1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.
10,000	60,000	— —	— —
5,000	30,000	29,000	28,000
1,000	8,200	8,100	8,000
500	2,500	2,300	2,100
100	700	600	500
10	100	82½	75

These salaries included also the expenses of the contingents maintained by each *Mansabdār*. But, as pointed out above, few *Mansabdārs* actually maintained the full complement indicating their rank. A commander of 100, if he had his full establishment, had to spend Rs. 313; one of 1,000, Rs. 3015½; and of 5,000, Rs. 10,637.

The higher *Mansabdārs* were mostly Governors of *Subāhs*. They were at first called *Sipahsālars*; towards the end of Akbar's reign they were known as *Hākims* and afterwards, *Sāhib Subāh* or *Subāhdār*, and still later merely *Subāh*. The other *Mansabdārs* held *jagirs* which after Akbar frequently changed hands.

The contingents of the *Mansabdārs* formed the greater part of the army, and were inspected from time to time. They were paid from the central or the local treasuries. Badāuni states: 'Shāhbāz Khān, the *Mir Bakshi*, introduced the custom and rule of the *dagho mahalli* (branding of animals), which had been the rule of Alā-ud-din Khaljī and afterwards the law under Sher Shāh. It was settled that every *Amir* should commence as a Commander of Twenty (*bisti*), and be ready with his followers to mount guard.... and when, according to the rule, he had brought the horses of his twenty troopers to be branded, he was then to be made a *Sadī* or Commander of 100 or more. They were likewise to keep elephants, horses, and camels, in proportion to their *Mansab*, according to the same rule. When they had brought to the masters their new contingents complete, they were to be promoted according to their merits and circumstances to the post of *Hazāri*, *Duhazāri* and even *Panjhazāri*, which is the highest *Mansab* (for other than Princes of the royal blood; Rāja Mān Singh, who held a *Mansab* of 7,000, was an exception); but if they did not do well at the musters they were to be put down.

2. *Ahadis*. 'There were many brave and worthy persons,' says Abul Fadl, "whom His Majesty does not appoint to a *mansab*, but whom he frees from being under the orders of any one. Such persons belong to the immediate servants of His Majesty, and are dignified by their independence. They go through the school of learning their duties, and have their knowledge tested. These were the *Ahadis*.

'For the sake of the convenience of the *Ahadis*, a separate *Diwan* and a pay-master are appointed, and one of the great *Amirs* is their chief ..... Many *Ahadis* have indeed more than Rs. 500 per mensem..... in the beginning, when their rank was first established, some *Ahadis* mustered eight horses; but now the limit is five..... *Ahadis* are mustered every four months, when on a certificate signed by the *Diwan* and the *Bakshi*, which is called now-a-days *Tachihah*, the clerk of the treasury writes out a receipt, to be counter-signed by the principal grantees. This the treasurer keeps and pays the claim..... On joining the service, an *Ahadi* generally finds his own horse; but afterwards gets it from the Government. .... Those who are in want of horses, are continually taken before His Majesty, who gives away many horses as presents or as part of the pay, one half being reckoned as grant, and the other half being deducted in four instalments at the subsequent four musters; or, if the *Ahadi* be in debt, in eight instalments.'

3. *Dākhili*. 'A fixed number of troops are handed over to the *Mansabdārs*; but they are paid by the State. His Majesty has ordered

to designate these infantry soldiers in the descriptive rolls as *nimak suwaram*, or half troopers.

'The fourth part of *Dākhili* troops are matchlock-bearers ; the others carry bows.

'Carpenters, workers in iron, water-carriers, pioneers, belong to this class.'

4. *Infantry*. 'They are of various kinds, and perform remarkable duties. His Majesty has made suitable regulations for their several ranks, and guides great and small in the most satisfactory manner.

'The *First Class* gets 500 *dāms* ; the *Second*, 400 *dāms* ; the *Third*, 300 *dāms* ; the *Fourth*, 240 *dāms* ; (Re. 1 = 40 *dāms*.)

'There are 12,000 Imperial matchlock-bearers. Attached to this service is an experienced *Bitikchi*, an honest treasurer and an active *Darogah*. A few *bandugchis* are selected for these offices ; the others hold the following ranks :—

'Some are distinguished by their experience and zeal and are therefore appointed over a certain number of others, so that uniformity may pervade the whole, and the duties be performed with propriety and understanding. The pay of these (non-commissioned) officers is of four grades : *First*, 300 *dāms* ; *Second*, 280 *dāms* ; *Third*, 270 *dāms* ; *Fourth*, 260 *dāms*.

'Common *bandugchis* are divided into five classes, and each class into three sub-divisions. *First Class*, 250, 240 and 230 *dāms*. *Second Class*, 220, 210, 200 *dāms*. *Third Class*, 190, 180, and 170 *dāms*. *Fourth Class*, 160, 150, and 140 *dāms*. *Fifth Class*, 130, 120, and 110 *dāms*.

Besides these regular troops there were a number of miscellaneous camp followers like the runners, wrestlers, and *Palki-bearers*. About the last the *Ain* says, 'They form a class of foot-servants peculiar to India. They carry heavy loads on their shoulders, and travel through mountains and valleys. With their *Pālkis*, *singhāsans*, *chaudols*, and *dulis*, they walk so evenly, that the man inside is not inconvenienced by any jolting. There are many in the country, but the best came from the *Dakhin* and *Bengal*. . . . . The pay of a head bearer varies from 192 to 384 *dāms*. Common bearers get from 120 to 160 *dāms*.'

*Army Regulations* : 'When His Majesty had fixed the ranks of the army, and enquired into the quality of the horses, he ordered that up-right *Bitikchis* should make out descriptive rolls of the soldiers and write down their peculiar marks. Their ages, the names of their fathers, dwelling-places, and race, were to be registered. A *Darogha* also was appointed whose duty it was to see that the men were not unnecessarily detained. They were to perform their duties without taking bribes or asking for remuneration. . . .

'His majesty has also appointed five experienced officers who have to look after the condition of the men, their horses, and the stipulated amount of pay.'

Various signs were used for branding horses. 'At last, numerals were introduced, which plan best frustrates fraudulent practices. They make



iron numerals, by which all indistinctness is avoided. These new signs are likewise put on the right thigh.....The carefulness with which the system of marking horses was attended to, resulted at once in truthful reports regarding dead horses...Horses answering the description in the roles were even hired, and substituted for the old ones; but as the mark was not forthcoming, the deception was detected, and the soldiers thus learnt to be honest.....

'The Imperial army has been divided into twelve parts each of which mounts guard for the space of one month. This gives all troops, whether near or far, an opportunity to come to Court and to partake of the liberality of His Majesty. But those who are stationed at the frontiers, or told off for any important duty, merely send in reports of their exact condition, and continue to perform His Majesty's special orders. On the first of every solar month, the guards are drawn up to salute His Majesty, as is usual on weekly parades, and are then distinguished by royal marks of favour.

'The Imperial army has also been divided into twelve other divisions, each of which is selected in turn, to come to Court for one year and do duty near the person of His Majesty.

'His Majesty generally inspects the guards himself, and takes notice of the presence or absence of the soldiers...If His Majesty is prevented by more important affairs from attending, one of the Princes is ordered to inspect the guards. From predilection and a desire to teach soldiers their duties as also from a regard to general efficiency, His Majesty pays attention to the guards. If any one is absent without having a proper excuse, or from laziness, he is fined one week's pay, or receives a suitable reprimand.'

*The Arsenal* : 'The order of the Household, the efficiency of the Army and the welfare of the country, are intimately connected with the state of this department; hence His Majesty gives it every attention, and looks scrutinizingly into its working order. He introduces all sorts of new methods, and studies their applicability to practical purposes.

'Guns are wonderful locks for protecting the august edifice of the State; and befitting keys for the door of conquest. With the exception of Turkey, there is perhaps no country which in its guns has more means of securing the Government than this. There are now-a-days guns made of such size that the ball weighs 12 *mans*; several elephants and a thousand cattle are required to transport one. His Majesty looks upon the care bestowed on the efficiency of this branch as one of the higher objects of a King, and devotes to it much of his time. *Daroghas* and clever clerks are appointed, to keep the whole in proper working order....

'The Imperial guns are carefully distributed over the whole kingdom, and each *Subāh* has that kind which is fit for it; for the siege of fortresses and for naval engagements, His Majesty has separate guns made, which accompany his victorious armies on their marches....

' *Amirs* and *Ahadis* are on staff employ in this branch. The pay of the foot varies from 100 to 400 *dāms*.

' Matchlocks are now made so strong, that they do not burst, though let off when filled to the top. Formerly they could not fill them to more than a quarter. Besides, they made them with the hammer and the anvil by flattening pieces of iron, and joining the flattened edges of both sides. Some left them, from foresight, on one side open ; but numerous accidents were the results, especially in the former kind. His Majesty has invented an excellent method of construction : They flatten iron, and twist it round obliquely in the form of a roll, so that the folds get longer at every twist ; then they join the folds, not edge to edge, but, so as to allow them to lie one over the other, and heat them gradually in the fire. They also take cylindrical pieces of iron, and pierce them when hot with an iron pin. Three or four of such pieces make one gun ; or in the case of smaller ones, two. Guns are often made of a length of two yards ; those of a smaller kind are one and a quarter yards long. . . . Bullets are also made so as to cut a sword. . . . Several things are marked on every matchlock, *viz.*, the weight of the raw and the manufactured iron ; the place where the iron is taken from ; the workman ; the place where the gun is made ; the date ; its number. . . .

' Formerly a strong man had to work a long time with iron instruments, in order to clean matchlocks. His Majesty, from his practical knowledge, has invented a wheel, by the motion of which sixteen barrels may be cleaned in a very short time. The wheel is turned by a cow.

*The fleet* : ' This department is of great use for the successful operations of the army, and for the benefit of the country in general ; it furnishes means of obtaining things of value, provides for agriculture, and His Majesty's household. His Majesty, in fostering the source of power, keeps four objects in view, and looks upon promoting the efficiency of this department as an act of divine worship.

' *Firstly*. The fitting out of strong boats, capable of carrying elephants. Some are made in such a manner as to be of use in sieges and for the conquest of strong forts. Experienced officers look upon ships as if they were horses and dromedaries, and use them as excellent means of conquest. So specially in Turkey, Zanzibar, and Europe. In every part of His Majesty's Empire, ships are numerous ; but in Bengal, Kashmir, and *T'hat'ha* (Sind) they are the pivot of all commerce. . . . Along with the coast of the ocean, in the west, east, and south of India, large ships are built, which are suitable for voyages. The harbours have been put into excellent condition, and the experience of seamen has much improved. Large ships are also built at *Ilāhābās* and *Lāhor*, and are then sent to the coast.

' *Secondly*. To appoint experienced seamen, acquainted with the tides, the depths of the ocean, the time when the several winds blow, and their advantages and disadvantages. They must be familiar with shallows and banks. Besides, a seaman must be hale, strong, a good swimmer,

kind-hearted, hard-working, capable of bearing fatigue, patient, in fact he must possess all good qualities. Men of such character can only be found after much trouble. The best seamen came from Malibar (Malabar).

'*Thirdly.* An experienced man has been appointed to look after the rivers....As he possesses experience, he settles every difficulty which arises regarding fords, and takes care that such places are not overcrowded, or too narrow, or very uneven, or full of mud. He regulates the number of passengers that a ferry-boat may carry; he must not allow travellers to be delayed, and *sees that poor people are passed over gratis*. He ought not to allow people to swim across, or wares to be deposited anywhere else but at fording places. He should also prevent people from crossing at night unless in cases of necessity.

'*Fourthly.* The remission of duties. His Majesty, in his mercy, has remitted many tolls, though the income derived from them equalled the revenue of a whole country. He only wishes that boatmen should get their wages. The State takes certain taxes in harbour places; but they never exceed  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., which is so little compared with the taxes formerly levied, and merchants look upon harbour taxes as totally remitted.

'The following sums are levied as river tolls:—For every boat Re 1 per *kos*, at the rate of 1000 *mans*, provided the boat and the men belong to one and the same owner. But if the boat belongs to another man and everything in the boat to the man who has hired it, the tax is Re. 1 for every  $2\frac{1}{2}$  *kos*. At ferry places, an elephant has to pay 10*d.* for crossing; a laden cart, 4*d.*; same empty, 2*d.*; a laden camel 1*d.*; empty camels, horses, cattle with their things,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ *d.*; same, empty,  $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* Other beasts of burden pay  $1/16$ *d.*; which includes the toll due by the driver. Twenty people pay 1*d.* for crossing; but they are often taken gratis.

'The rule is that one-half or one-third of the tolls thus collected go to the state (the rest to the boatmen).

'Merchants are therefore well treated, and the articles of foreign countries are imported in large quantities.'

#### AKBAR'S TREASURES :

The Flemish writer De Laet (1593-1649) states :—The wealth of this prince can be estimated firstly, from the size of the territories which he controls (these form an Empire larger than that of Persia and equal to, if not greater than, that of Turkey); secondly, from the fact that no one in his Empire has any possessions at all except what he holds through the prince's liberality and at his pleasure, and that he himself inherits the property not only of all dead magnates, but also of inferior persons, taking for himself as much as he pleases of what they leave; and thirdly, from the immense gifts which are bestowed upon him every day not only by his subjects

but also by foreign princes. Although De Laet really wrote this of Jahāngir, his statement is equally applicable to Akbar. Further on he observes, on the death of 'Achabar, grandfather of the prince now reigning [Shāh Jahān], his treasures were carefully counted, and were found to amount in all (including gold) silver and copper, both wrought and unwrought, together with jewels and all manners of household commodities to 34 carores, 82 lacks, and 26,386 rupees (*i. e.*, to Rs. 348,226,386½): of this total Rs. 198,346,666½ was in species of all descriptions.'

This treasure included, besides fine porcelain, cloth of gold from Persia, Turkey, Guzerat and Europe; muslins from Bengala, and woollen cloth from Europe, Persia, and Tartary; also books written by great authors, beautifully bound, to the number of 24,000, estimated at Rs. 6,463,731 in value,' etc. Prof. Banerjee, commenting upon this, writes, "The inventory of the treasure of Akbar is an unique contribution of De Laet. It agrees with the later accounts of Mandelslo (1638) and Manrique (1649)...The total comes to 40 millions. The purchasing power of money was six times greater than the pre-war rate, say, in 1914. In other words, the total brings us to the huge figure of £240 million sterling. Henry VII (who died in 1509) left £1,800,000 in bullion and was considered rich. Henry VIII debased the coinage, and Elizabeth left behind a debt of £400,000 and huge number of farthingales!"

#### SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS REFORMS :

With all his genius for practical achievement, Akbar was essentially an idealist and a dreamer. In addition to his conquests and administrative organisation, described above, he also aimed at what Abu-l Faḍl calls 'the reformation of the manners of the people.' Thus, while on the one hand, he forbade infanticide, *sati*, excessive indulgence in intoxicating drinks, cow-slaughter, etc., on the other, he encouraged widow remarriage, abolished the invidious pilgrim-tax, *jizya*, and tried to cement the differences between the two main sections of his people—Hindus and Muslims—by setting an example of intercommunal wedding, making no distinction of caste or creed in the conferment of high titles and offices, and above all, by attempting to establish a new faith which should be the harbinger of a new world :

'For an Empire ruled by one head,' Akbar rightly considered, 'it was a bad thing to have the members divided among themselves, and at

variance one with the other....We ought, therefore, to bring them all into one, but in such a fashion that they should be *one* and *all* with the great advantage of not losing what is good in any one religion, while gaining whatever is better in another. *In that way honour would be rendered to God, peace would be given to the peoples, and security to the Empire.*'

This glorious idealism of Akbar has been much misunderstood and misrepresented. Bartoli saw in it only Akbar's 'astute and knavish policy.' Even Vincent Smith speaks of "*The fit of religious frenzy* which assailed Akbar at the beginning of May 1578," "a symptom of the intense interest in the claims of rival religions which he manifested in 1578-79 prior to the signing of the infallibility decree in September of the latter year." He further declares, "The Divine Faith was *a monument of Akbar's folly*, not of his wisdom....The whole scheme was the outcome of ridiculous vanity, *a monstrous growth of unrestrained autocracy.*" In view of this unrestrained criticism it is necessary to go into a detailed examination of Akbar's religious and social reforms.

*Din-i-Ilāhi* : Far from being the 'monument of Akbar's folly,' the *Din-i-Ilāhi*, as the new faith was called, was the crowning expression of the Emperor's national idealism. Akbar, at least in this respect, is not to be judged by the statements of the Jesuits alone. Being keenly disappointed in their expectations of converting the Emperor, these European missionaries became too prone to give credence to statements discrediting Akbar. To cite Badāuni in confirmation of the Jesuits, is only to call two prejudiced witnesses instead of one. A fair judge ought to make sure, especially before jumping into a condemnation, that the witnesses themselves are above suspicion. We shall, therefore, consider accounts of the *Din-i-Ilāhi* given by two rival witnesses, Abu-l Faḍl and Badāuni, and try to arrive at the truth on the merits of their evidence.

'Whenever, from lucky circumstances,' says Abu-l Faḍl, 'the time arrives that a nation learns to understand how to worship truth, the people will naturally look to their King on account of the high position which he occupies, and expect him to be their spiritual leader as well.....A King will therefore sometimes observe the element of harmony in a multitude of things, or sometimes, reversely, a multitude of things in that which is apparently one; for he sits on the throne of distinction, and is thus equally removed from joy or sorrow. Now this is the case with the monarch of the present age (Akbar).....He now is the spiritual guide of the nation, and sees in the performance of this duty a means of pleasing God.'

This was the outlook of the age, and we are not to forget that elsewhere than in India, people had not outgrown the belief : *cujus regio ejus religio*. England looked to the Tudors to save the nation and the Tudors expected the people to behave themselves. At least under Akbar there were no 'Smithfield fires', and the King did not seek to change the creed of a nation because he desired to get rid of an old wife in order to marry her chamber-maid !

Admitting the need for a national church, there is nothing ridiculous in conceiving a new ritual. Akbar declared himself the spiritual no less than the temporal head of the State ; but he never forced on the people any Act of Supremacy or Uniformity.

'In the magnanimity of his heart, he never thinks of his perfection,' says Abu-l Faḍl, 'though he is the ornament of the world... Notwithstanding every strictness and reluctance shewn by His Majesty in admitting novices, there are many thousands, men of all classes, who have cast over their shoulders the mantle of belief, and look upon their conversion to the New Faith as the means of obtaining every blessing...

'The members of the Divine Faith, on seeing each other, observe the following custom. One says "*Allāhu Akbar*"; and the other responds, "*Jalla Jalāluhu*". The motive of His Majesty in laying down this mode of salutation is to remind men to think of the origin of their existence, and to keep the Deity in fresh, lively, and grateful remembrance.

'It is also ordered by His Majesty that, instead of the dinner usually given in remembrance of a man after his death, each member should prepare a dinner during his lifetime, and thus gather provisions for his last journey.

'Each member is to give a party on the anniversary of his birth-day, and arrange a sumptuous feast. He is to bestow alms, and thus prepare provisions for the long journey.

'His Majesty has also ordered that members should abstain from eating flesh. They may allow others to eat flesh, without touching it themselves ; but during the month of their birth they are not even to approach meat. Nor shall members go near anything that they have themselves slain, nor eat of it. Neither shall they make use of the same vessels with butchers, fishers, and bird-catchers.'

*Badāuni's Comments* : Badāuni was an uncompromising critic of Akbar's innovations. He was the very antithesis of Abu-l Faḍl. He looked upon Akbar as one lost to Islam. "His historical work, entitled *Muntakhabut Tawārikh*," says Blochmann, "is much prized as written by an enemy of Akbar, whose character, in its grandeur and its failings, is much more prominent than in the *Akbar-nāmah*, or the *Tabaqāt-i-Akbari* or the *Ma'asiri Rahimi*. It is especially of value

for the religious views of the Emperor, and contains interesting biographies of most famous men and poets of Akbar's time."

'In this year (937 H.),' writes Badāuni, 'His Majesty was anxious to unite in his person the powers of the State and those of the Church; for he could not bear to be subordinate to any one. As he had heard that the Prophet, his lawful successors, and some of the most powerful Kings, as Amir, Timūr and Mirza Ulugh Beg, and several others, had themselves read the *Khutbah* (the Friday prayer), he resolved to do the same, apparently in order to imitate their example, but in reality to appear in the public as the *Mujtahid* of the age. Accordingly, on Friday, the first Jumada-l-awwal 987, in the Jami Masjid of Fathpur, which he had built near the place, His Majesty commenced to read the *Khutbah*.....These are the verses—

"The Lord has given me the Empire,  
And a wise heart, and a strong arm,  
He has guided me in righteousness and justice,  
And has removed from my thoughts everything but justice.  
His praise surpasses man's understanding,  
Great is His power Allāhu Akbar!"

'In the same year (987), a document made its appearance, which bore the signatures and seals of Makhdum-ul-mulk of Sheikh Abdunnabi,..... of Cādr Jahān, the *Mufti* of the Empire, of Sheikh Mubārīk, the deepest writer of the age, and Ghāzi Khān of Badakhshān, who stood unrivalled in the various sciences.....

*The Document:* "Whereas Hindustan has now become the centre of security and peace, and the land of justice and beneficence, a large number of people, especially learned men and lawyers, have immigrated and chosen this country for their home. Now we, the principal Ulemas, who are not only well-versed in the several departments of the law and in the principles of jurisprudence, and well-acquainted with the edicts which rest on reason or testimony, but are also known for our piety and honest intentions, have duly considered the deep meaning, first of the verse of Qorān (Sur. IV, 62) :

'Obey God and obey the Prophet, and those who have authority among you,' and secondly, of the genuine tradition : 'Surely, the man who is dearest to God on the day of judgment, is the *Imām i Adil* ; whosoever obeys the Amir obeys Me ; and whosoever rebels against him, rebels against Me,' and thirdly, of several other proofs based on reasoning or testimony ; and we have agreed that the rank of a *Sultan-i-Adil* (a just ruler is higher in the eyes of God than the rank of a *Mujtahid*. Further we declare that the King of Islam, Amir of the Faithful, Shadow of God in the world *Abul Fath Jalāluddīn Muhammad Akbar Padishāh Ghāzi*, whose kingdom God perpetuate, is a most just, most wise, and a most God-fearing King. Should, therefore, in future, a religious question come up, regarding which the opinions of the *Mujtahids* are at variance, and His Majesty, in his penetrating understanding and clear wisdom, be inclined to adopt, for the benefit

*of the nation, and as a political expedient, any of the conflicting opinions which exist on that point, and issue a decree to that effect, we do hereby agree that such a decree shall be binding on us and on the whole nation.*

"Further, we declare that, should His Majesty think fit to issue a new order, we and the nation shall likewise be bound by it, *provided always that such an order be not only in accordance with some verse of the Qoran but also of real benefit for the nation*; and further, that any opposition on the part of the subjects to such an order as passed by His Majesty, shall involve damnation in the world to come, and loss of religion and property in this life.

"This document has been written with honest intentions, for the glory of God, and *the propagation of Islam, and is signed by us, the principal Ulemas and lawyers*, in the month of Rajab of the year 987 of the Hijrah."

Commenting on this, Badāuni writes, 'No sooner had His Majesty obtained this legal instrument, than the road of deciding any religious question was open; *the superiority of intellect of the Imām was established, and opposition was rendered impossible. All orders regarding things which our law allows or disallows, were abolished, and the superiority of intellect of the Imām became law.*'

The gravamen of Badāuni's charge against the innovators was their rejection of Islamic revelation, and their intellectualism. 'The Emperor examined people,' he says, 'about the creation of the Koran, elicited their belief, or otherwise, in revelation, and raised doubts in them regarding all things connected with the Prophet and the Imāms. He distinctly denied the existence of Jins, of angels, and all other beings of the invisible world, as well as the miracles of the Prophet and the saints; he rejected the successive testimony of the witnesses of our Faith, the proof for the truths of the *Koran* as far as they agree with man's reason,' etc. Akbar had boldly declared, "Man's outward profession and the mere letter of Muhammadanism, without a heartfelt conviction, can avail nothing. . . . To repeat the words of the Creed, to perform circumcision, or to lie prostrate on the ground from dread of kingly power, can avail nothing in the sight of God." (E. & D. VI, pp. 60-61).

In the eyes of Badāuni this was unpardonable apostasy from the orthodox faith. From this moment onwards, he and the bigoted *mullas* began to execrate everything connected with the new faith; they had nothing but imprecations and invectives against every one connected therewith. Impotent orthodoxy raged and foamed; it raised the head of rebellion in 1581 and died away in futile discontent. We find it still simmering in the pages of the *Muntakhbat* :



'The poor (orthodox) Sheikhs who were, moreover, left to the mercies of Hindu Financial Secretaries, forgot in exile their spiritual soirées, and had no other place where to live, except mouse-holes.....

'In this year (988) low and mean fellows, who pretended to be learned, but were in reality fools, collected evidences that His Majesty was the *Sahib-i-Zaman* who would remove all differences of opinion among the seventy-two sects of Islam....The *Shias* mentioned similar nonsense..  
.....All this made His Majesty the more inclined to claim the dignity of a prophet, perhaps I should say, the dignity of something else.

'During this time, the four degrees of faith in His Majesty were defined. The four degrees consisted in readiness to sacrifice to the Emperor, property, life, honour, and religion. Whoever had sacrificed these four things, possessed four degrees; and whoever sacrificed one of these four, possessed one degree. All the courtiers now put their names down as faithful disciples of the throne.'

Badāuni has here definitely begun to caricature. Badāuni was certainly not one of "all the courtiers" who had signed away their 'property, life, honour, and religion' to the Emperor; and he continued to live at the Court of Akbar for the remaining fifteen years of his life (989-1004 H.). He has himself mentioned only sixteen names of the courtiers who accepted the Divine Faith, to which Abu-l Faḍl has added two. "With the exception of Bīr Bal, they are all Muhammadans; but to judge from Badāuni's remarks, the number of those that took the *Shakt*, must have been much larger," says Blochmann. According to Badāuni's own testimony, Rājās Bhagwān Dās and Mān Singh declined to accept the new faith; they were not persecuted, but continued to enjoy their high privileges and position.

Badāuni's mortification was further accentuated by the favours (or was it only fairness?) shown by Akbar to deserving Hindus: 'The real object of those who became disciples,' he writes, 'was to get into office; and *though His Majesty did everything to get this out of their heads, he acted very differently in the case of Hindus*, of whom he could not get enough (?); *for the Hindus, of course, are indispensable*; to them belongs half the army and half the land. Neither the Hindustanis nor the Moghuls can point to such grand lords as the Hindus have among themselves. But if others than Hindus came, and wished to become disciples at any sacrifice, His Majesty reprov'd or punished them (?). For their honour and zeal he did not care, nor did he notice whether they fell in with his views or not.(!)

Badāuni stands self-condemned out of the words of his own mouth ; in his opinion, not merely Akbar, but every one who deviated even a hair's breadth from the rigid orthodoxy of the Sunni creed was an apostate. His fulminations, therefore, against Akbar and Abu-l Faql are worth nothing. They are the effusions of a fanatic rankling under the reforms introduced by Akbar 'with the best of intentions.' We need consider here only the nature of these reforms. Let us follow Badāuni's own account of them :

'His Majesty was now (990) convinced that the Millennium of the Islamic dispensation was drawing near. No obstacle, therefore, remained to promulgate the designs which he had planned in secret. *The Sheikhs and Ulemas* who, on account of their obstinacy and pride, had to be entirely discarded, were gone, and His Majesty was free to disprove the orders and principles of Islam, and to ruin the faith of the nation by making new and absurd regulations.'

*New Regulations* : 1. 'The first order which was passed was, that the coinage should show the era of the Millennium (Ilahi Era), and that a history of the one thousand years should be written, but commencing from the death of the Prophet.

2. 'Other extraordinary innovations were devised as political expedients, and such orders were given that one's senses got quite perplexed. Thus the *sijdah* or prostration, was ordered to be performed as being proper for Kings ; but instead of *sijdah*, the word *zaminbos* was used.

3. 'Wine also was allowed, if used for strengthening the body as recommended by doctors ; but no mischief or impropriety was to result from the use of it, and strict punishments were laid down for drunkenness or gatherings and uproars. For the sake of keeping everything within proper limits, His Majesty established a wine-shop near the palace, and put the wife of the porter in charge of it, as she belonged to the caste of wine-sellers. The price of wine was fixed by regulations, and any sick person could obtain wine on sending his own name and the names of his father and grandfather to the clerk of the shop....

4. 'Similarly,...The prostitutes of the realm (who had collected at the capital, and could scarcely be counted, so large was their number), had a separate quarter of the town assigned to them, which was called *Shaitanpurah*, or Devilsville. A *Darogah* and a clerk were also appointed for it, who registered the names of such as went to prostitutes, or wanted to take some of them to their houses. People might indulge in such connexions, provided the toll collectors knew of it....

5. 'Beef was interdicted, and to touch beef was considered defiling. The reason of this was that, from his youth, His Majesty had been in company with *Hindu libertines*, and had thus learnt to look upon a cow—which in their opinion is one of the reasons why the world still exists

—as something holy. Besides, the Emperor was subject to the influence of the numerous Hindu princesses of the Harem, who had gained so great an ascendancy over him, as to make him forswear beef, garlic, onions, and the wearing of a beard, which things His Majesty still avoids.

6. 'He had also introduced, though modified by his peculiar views, Hindu customs and *heresies* into the Court assemblies, and introduces them still, in order to please and win the Hindus and their castes ; he abstains from everything which they think is repugnant to their nature, and *looks upon shaving the beard as the highest sign of friendship and affection for him (!)*. Hence this custom has become very general.....

7. 'The ringing of bells as in use with the Christians, and the showing of the figure of the Cross,... and other childish play things of theirs, were daily in practice.

8. 'It was also forbidden to marry one's cousins or near relations, because such marriages are destructive of mutual love. *Boys were not to marry before the age of 16, nor girls before 14, because the offspring of early marriages were weakly.....* No one was to marry more than one wife, except in cases of barrenness ; but in all other cases the rule was "One man, and one wife"..... If widows liked to remarry, they might do so *though this was against the ideas of the Hindus.*

9. 'A Hindu girl, whose husband had died before the marriage was consummated, should not be burnt. If a Hindu woman wished to be burnt with her husband, they should not prevent her ; but she should not be forced.

10. 'Hindus who, when young, had from pressure become Musalmans, were allowed to go back to the faith of their fathers. *No man should be interfered with on account of his religion, and every one should be allowed to change his religion, if he liked.* If a Hindu woman fall in love with a Muhammadan, and change her religion, she should be taken from him by force, and be given back to her family. (Similarly with a Muhammadan woman marrying a Hindu—*Dabistan*). People should not be molested, if they wished to build churches and prayer rooms, or idol temples, or fire temples.'

All this, according to Badāuni constituted blasphemy and apostasy ! It is strange that in spite of this, Vincent Smith should cite Badāuni as a witness "*of the highest value.*" "*Badāuni's interesting work,*" he says, "*contains so much hostile criticism of Akbar that it was kept concealed during that emperor's life-time, and could not be published until after Jahangir's accession. The book, being written from the point of view taken by a bigoted Sunni, is of the highest value as a check on the turgid panegyric composed by the latitudinarian Abul Fazl.* It gives information about the development of Akbar's opinions on religion, which is not to be found in the other

Persian histories, but *agrees generally with the testimony of the Jesuit authors.*"

On the strength of the testimony of this 'hostile' and 'bigoted Sunni witness,' Smith avers, "The general principle of toleration. . . , while actually put in practice concerning religions other than Islam, was not acted on in matters concerning Muhammadan faith and practice. *Akbar showed bitter hostility to the faith of his fathers and his own youth, and actually perpetrated a persecution of Islam.*"

#### *Genesis of Akbar's Reforms :*

The reforms described above were not the work of a single year ; they were the product of a gradual evolution under a variety of circumstances. Akbar lived in an age of great spiritual awakening in India as well as Europe.

"The sixteenth century," writes Prof. Sinha, "is a century of religious revival in the history of the world. The grand currents of the Reformation compare favourably with the surging up of a new life in India. India experienced an awakening that quickened her progress and vitalized her national life. The dominant note of this awakening was Love and Liberalism—Love that united man to God, and therefore to his brother man, and Liberalism born of this love that levelled down the barrier of caste, creed and calling, and took its stand on the bed-rock of human existence and essence of all religions, Universal Brotherhood. With glorious ideals it inspired the Hindu and Muslim alike, and they forgot for a time the trivialities of their creed. To the Muslim as to the Hindu, it heralded the dawn of a new era, to the Muslim with the birth of the promised Mahdi, to the Hindu with the realization of the all-absorbing love of God."

Not only were the times stirring and propitious, but Akbar was also born in a family that was deeply religious. While Bābur and Humāyun were both men of an essentially deep faith, they took comparatively lightly the outward forms of religion, as indicated by their change of creed under political necessity. Akbar was thus early brought under the liberalising influences of his family and country. His tutor Abdul Latif was 'a paragon of learning' and the guiding principle of his life was '*Sulh-i-kul*' or peace with all.

Smith himself writes : "Akbar from early youth had been passionately interested in the mystery of the relation between God and man, and in all the deep questions concerned with that relation. 'Discourses on philosophy,' he said, 'have such a charm for me that they distract me from all else, and I forcibly restrain myself from listening to them, lest the

necessary duties of the hour should be neglected.' (*Ain.*, vol. iii, p. 386). When he came home to his capital at the beginning of 1575 he was conscious of having gained a long succession of remarkable and decisive victories which left him without an important enemy in the world as known to him. We are told at this time he 'spent whole nights in praising God.... His heart was full of reverence for Him, who is the true giver, and from a feeling of thankfulness for his past successes he would sit many a morning alone in prayer and meditation on a large flat stone of an old building which lay near the palace in a lovely spot, with his head bent over his chest, gathering the bliss of the early hours of dawn."

As early as 1562, when Akbar was only twenty years of age, he had "experienced a remarkable spiritual awakening." 'On the completion of my twentieth year,' he said, 'I experienced an internal bitterness, and from the lack of spiritual provision for my last journey my soul was seized with exceeding sorrow' (*Ain.*, vol. iii, p. 386).

Commenting on this, Smith rightly observes, "It is impossible not to connect this access of religious melancholy with the public events which preceded it..... He had become conscious of the weight of the vast responsibilities resting upon his shoulders, and was forced to the conclusion that he must rely on his own strength, with Divine help, to bear them... *He never again placed himself under the control of any adviser, but mapped out his course, right or wrong, for himself.....* During the years in which he was apparently devoted to sport alone, and oblivious of all serious affairs, the young man had been thinking and shaping out a course of policy. His abolition of the practice of enslavement of prisoners of war, his marriage with the princess of Amber, and his reorganisation of the finances were measures which proved that his thinking had not been fruitless. *No minister would or could have carried them through.*"

In 1563, in accordance with the broad outlook which Akbar was developing, he abolished all pilgrim taxes throughout his dominions, declaring 'it was contrary to the will of God to tax people assembled to worship the Creator, even though their forms of worship might be considered erroneous.' The following year, 1564, he also remitted the *jizya*, or poll-tax on non-Muslims, although this involved a large loss of revenue.

*Abu-l Faql's Influence* : Smith says, with great justice to Akbar, "some writers are inclined to attribute too much influence on Akbar's policy Abul Fazl. It is noteworthy that Akbar abolished the *jizya* ten years before he made the acquaintance of his famous secretary. He had swept away the pilgrim taxes at a still earlier date. *The main lines of his policy, directed to obliterating all differences in treatment between Muslims and Hindus, were fixed as political principles while he was still to all outward appearance an orthodox and zealous Muslim,* and long before his

open breach with Islam, which may be dated in 1582, after the defeat of his brother's attempt to win the throne of India. When it is remembered that Akbar was only twenty-one or twenty-two years of age when he abolished the pilgrim tax and the *jizya*, in defiance of the sentiments of his co-religionists and the practice of his predecessors, we may well marvel at the strength of will displayed by a man so young, who a little time before seemed to care for nothing but sport."

In 1575 Akbar erected the *Ibadat-khana*, or the House of Worship, devoted to religious discussions. At first it was used only by Muslim Sheikhs, Saiyids, Ulemas, and Amirs. Debates were held every Thursday night and often lasted on till Friday noon. But the petty wranglings of the Muslim divines gave no satisfaction to Akbar's genuinely thirsty soul. Let us follow Badāuni's description of the state of things that made Akbar seek other fountains to slake his thirst :—

'For these discussions, which were held every Thursday night, His Majesty invited the Sayyids, Sheikhs, Ulemas and grandees, by turns. But as the guests generally commenced to quarrel about their places, and the order of precedence, His Majesty ordered that the grandees should sit on the east side; the Sayyids on the west side; the Ulemas, to the south; and the Sheikhs, to the north. The Emperor then used to go from one side to the other, and make his enquiries . . . . When all at once, one night, the vein of the neck of the Ulema of the age swelled up, and a horried noise and confusion ensued. His Majesty got very angry at their rude behaviour, and said to me (Badāuni), "In future report any of the Ulemas that cannot behave and talks nonsense, and I shall make him leave the hall." I gently said to Asaf Khān, "*If I were to carry out his order, most of the Ulemas would have to leave,*" when His Majesty suddenly asked what I had said. On hearing my answer, he was highly pleased, and mentioned my remark to those sitting near him.'

"The differences between the two parties of the Ulama, one of whom denounced as heretical notions declared by the other to be the truth, confirmed Akbar in the opinion that both parties were in error, and that the truth must be sought outside the range of their bickerings." He therefore now turned for enlightenment to the Parsees, Jains, Christians, and Hindus. Or, in the words of Abu-l Faql : 'The Shahinshah's Court became the home of the inquirers of the "seven climes," and the assemblage of the wise of every religion and sect.'

*The Zoroastrians* : According to Smith, Akbar probably found more personal satisfaction in Zoroastrianism, the religion of the Parsees, than in any other of the numerous religions examined by

him so critically in his 'odd, (?) detached manner'. Dastur Meherjee Rāṇa of Nausāri had the privilege of initiating Akbar into the mysteries of this religion in 1578-79. They had first met near Khankra Khari during Akbar's Gujarat campaign in 1573. After his death in 1591 the famous Dastur was succeeded by his son at Akbar's Court. He was granted a *jagir* of 200 *bhigas* of land (100 acres), which was later on increased by one half. From 1580 Akbar publicly prostrated before the sun and fire, and in the evenings when the lamps were lighted it became the practice for the whole Court to rise respectfully. According to Badāuni he ordered that dead bodies should be buried with their heads towards the east (rising sun). 'His Majesty even commenced to sleep in this position.'

*The Jainas*: "The evidence available," writes Dr. Hirananda Shastri, "would show that Akbar learnt the *Surya-sahasra-nāma* from a Jaina teacher of his. . . . The list given by Abul Fazl names three Jaina *gurus* for whom the Great Mughal had a very high regard. The *Hiravijaya kāvyam* shows that the stoppage of animal slaughter was due to the teaching of Hīravijaya Sūri on whom Akbar had conferred the grand title of *Jagad-guru* or the Preceptor of the World. The Ādisvara temple on the holy hill of Śatruñjaya near Palitana in Kathiawar has a long Sanskrit inscription written on its walls which combines the praise of this Jaina monk with that of Akbar and may well be referred to for knowing what the Great Mughal did under the noble influence of the Jaina saints. Vincent Smith has rightly remarked that 'Akbar's action in abstaining almost wholly from eating meat and in issuing stringent prohibitions, resembles those of Aśoka restricting to the narrowest limits the destruction of life, certainly was taken in obedience to the doctrine of his Jaina teachers.' The colophon of the commentary on the *Kādambarī* would show that Akbar read the *Surya-sahasra-nāma* with Bhānuchandra whom Hīravijaya Sūri had left behind after his famous visit to Akbar. Siddhichandra, the joint author of the said commentary, and a disciple of Bhānuchandra, was another teacher of the Great Mughal."

*The Christians*: In the preceding chapter we have already dealt at length with Akbar's relations with the Jesuits from whom he desired to know the truth of Christianity. Badāuni accuses Akbar of adopting the Cross 'and other childish playthings of theirs.' Smith says,

"The contribution made to the debates by Christian disputants was an important factor among the forces which led Akbar to renounce (?) the Muslim religion." But if the Fathers expected to have in Akbar an Imperial convert to their religion, they were sorely miscalculating. Yet we cannot agree with Smith when he declares "Probably Akbar was *never perfectly sincere* when he used expressions implying belief in the Christian religion. It may be true that *he preferred it, on the whole, to any other religion*, but . . . His interest lay chiefly in the study of the subject now called 'Comparative Religion,' and was *prompted by intellectual curiosity rather than by an awakened conscience*." He is nearer the truth when he says, "He went so far in relation to each religion that different people had reasonable ground for affirming him to be a Zoroastrian, a Hindu, a Jain, or a Christian. Nevertheless, he could not bring himself to accept frankly any one of the four creeds however much he might admire certain doctrines of each or even practise some parts of the ritual of all four."

Akbar's interest in religion was deeper than the mere 'intellectual curiosity' of a student of 'Comparative Religion.' In 1578 (May), then in his thirty-sixth year, Akbar suddenly returned from a great hunt on the Jhelum, for which he had made elaborate arrangements, when in the words of Abu-l Faḍl, 'a sublime joy took possession of his bodily frame; attraction of the cognition of God cast its ray.' This strange experience is confirmed by Badāuni who writes, 'suddenly, all at once, a strange state and strong frenzy came upon the Emperor, and an extraordinary change was manifested in his manner to such an extent as cannot be accounted for. And every one attributed it to some cause or other; but God alone knoweth secrets. And at that time he ordered the hunting to be abandoned: 'Take care! for the Grace of God comes suddenly. It comes suddenly: it comes to the mind of the wise!'

Smith in his comments on this peculiar incident is characteristically sceptical (cynical?):

"He (Akbar) gave vent to his religious emotion by the *fantastic* freak of filling the Anūptalāo tank in the palace at Fathpur-Sikri with a vast mass of coin, exceeding, it is said, ten millions of rupees in value, which he subsequently distributed.

"That is all we know about the mysterious occurrence. The information is *tantalysing in its meagreness*, but probably never gave any fully intelligible account of the spiritual storm which swept through him as he sat or lay under the tree. *Perhaps he slept and had a dream, or, as seems*



to be more likely, he may have had an epileptic fit." (!) He is perhaps nearer the mark when he confesses, "No man can tell exactly what happened.....when, like Dante, he was '*nel mezo del cammin di nostra vita*,' 'in the middle of life's path,' and, like the poet, saw a vision, beholding things that cannot be uttered."

"Akbar was by nature a mystic, who sought earnestly, like his Sufi friends, to attain the ineffable bliss of direct contact with the Divine Reality—He was not an ordinary man, and his complex nature, like that of St. Paul, Muhammad, Dante, and other great men with a tendency to mysticism, presents perplexing problems."

*The Hindus* : Such a nature could hardly escape from the liberal idealism of the Hindus who surrounded him like the very air he breathed. His policy towards the Rajputs, the most militant section of the Hindus, has already been commented upon. He took to himself Hindu wives as symbolic of the intimate union he wished to cultivate between the two largest sections of his subjects. He exalted Rājas Mān Singh, Bhagwān Dās, Bīr Bal, and Todar Mal to the highest ranks given to any noble in the realm. He adopted Hindu dress and religious symbolism to such an extent as to tantalise and scandalise orthodox Muslims like Badāuni. To his utter chagrin he set Badāuni the task of translating into Persian the sacred books of the infidels like the *Mahābhārata*.

'The killing of animals on certain days was forbidden, as on Sundays, because this day is sacred to the Sun....To please the Hindus....His Majesty abstained altogether from meat, as a religious penance, gradually extending the several fasts during the year over six months and even more, with the view of eventually discontinuing the use of meat altogether.....His Majesty had also one thousand and one Sanskrit names of the Sun collected, and read them daily, devoutly turning to the Sun (like the Hindus worshipping *Gāyatri*).....He also adopted several other practices connected with Sun-worship. He used to wear the Hindu mark on the forehead, and ordered the band to play at midnight and at break of day.... Once a year also during a night, called *Sivarāt* a great meeting was held of all *Jogis* of the Empire, when the Emperor ate and drank with the principal *Jogis* who promised him that he should live three and four times as long as ordinary men.....Cheating, thieving Brāhmins..... told the Emperor that he was an incarnation (*avatār*), like Rām, Krishn, and other infidel Kings.....In order to flatter him, they also brought Sanskrit verses, said to have been taken from the sayings of ancient sages, in which it was predicted that a great conqueror would rise up in India, who would honour Brāhmins and cows, and govern the earth with justice. They also wrote this nonsense on old-looking paper, and showed it to the Emperor, who believed every word of it.'

## SOME ESTIMATES OF AKBAR :

We might close this brief study of Akbar with a few well-known opinions and estimates of his character and achievements.

*Jahāngir's Memories* : 'My father always associated with the learned of every creed and religion : especially the Pandits and the learned of India, and *although he was illiterate*, so much became clear to him through constant intercourse with the learned and wise, in his conversation with them, that *no one knew him to be illiterate*, and he was so well-acquainted with the niceties of verse and prose compositions, that his deficiency was not thought of. Notwithstanding his kingship, his treasures and his buried wealth past computation, his fighting elephants and Arab horses, he never by a hair's breadth placed his foot beyond the base of humility before the throne of God, and never for one moment forgot Him. He associated with the good of every race and creed and persuasion, and was gracious to all in accordance with their condition and understanding. He passed his nights in wakefulness, and slept little in the day ; the length of his sleep during a whole night and day was not more than a watch and a half. He counted his wakefulness at night as so much added to his life.'

*Col. Malletson* : "Akbar's great idea was the union of all India under one head... His code was the grandest of codes for a ruler, for the founder of an empire. They were the principles by accepting which his western successors maintain it at the present day. Certainly, though his European contemporaries were the most eminent of their respective countries (Elizabeth in England and Henry IV in France), he need not shrink from comparison even with these. His reputation is built upon deeds which lived after him..... The foundations dug by Akbar were so deep that his son, although so unlike him, was able to maintain the Empire which the principles of his father had welded together. When we reflect what he did, the age in which he did it, the method he introduced to accomplish it, we are bound to recognise in Akbar one of those illustrious men whom Providence sends, in the hour of a nation's trouble, to reconduct it into those paths of peace and toleration which alone can assure the happiness of millions." (*Akbar*, pp. 196-200).

*Stanley Lane-Poole* : "The noblest king that ever ruled in India" (p. 288). "The true founder and organiser of the Empire."

"Represents the golden age of the Mughal Empire." (p. 238)  
 "Assimilation of the Hindu chiefs was the most conspicuous feature of Akbar's reign" . . . . . "The remarkable points about this expansion . . . . . were, *first*, that it was done with willing help of the Hindu princes, and *secondly*, that expansion went hand-in-hand with orderly administration. This was a new thing in Indian government, for hitherto the local officials had done pretty much as it pleased them, and the central authority had seldom interfered so long as the revenue did not suffer. Akbar allowed no oppression—if he knew of it—by his lieutenants, and not a few of his campaigns were undertaken mainly for the purpose of punishing governors who had been guilty of self-seeking and peculation. Much of the improvement was due to his employment of Hindus, who at that time were better men of business than the uneducated and mercenary adventurers who formed a large proportion of the Muhammadan invaders (pp. 259-60).

"There is no name in medieval history more renowned in India at the present day than that of Todar Mal, and the reason is that nothing in Akbar's reforms more nearly touched the welfare of the people than the great financier's reconstruction of the revenue system." (p. 261). "Todar Mal's order (to keep all accounts in Persian), and Akbar's generous policy of allowing Hindus to compete for the highest honours,—Mān Singh was the first commander of 7,000—explain two facts: *First*, that before the end of the eighteenth century the Hindus had almost become the Persian teachers of the Muhammadans; *secondly*, that a new dialect could arise in India, the *Urdu*, which, without the Hindus as receiving medium, could never have been called into existence." (*Medieval India*, pp. 265-66).

*Edwardes and Garrett* : "Akbar has proved his worth in different fields of action. He was an intrepid soldier, a great general, a wise administrator, a benevolent ruler, and a sound judge of character. He was a born leader of men and can rightly claim to be one of the mightiest sovereigns known to history. . . . During a reign of nearly fifty years, he built up a powerful Empire which could vie with the strongest, and established a dynasty whose hold over India was not contested by any rival for about a century. His reign witnessed the final transformation of the Mughals from mere

military invaders into a permanent Indian dynasty." (*Mughal Rule in India*, p. 53).

*Vincent Smith* : "The practical ability displayed by Akbar as a soldier, general, administrator, diplomatist, and supreme ruler has been shown abundantly by his whole history and does not need further exposition. The personal force of his character, discernible even now with sufficient clearness, was overpowering to his contemporaries. . . . He was a born king of men, with a rightful claim to be one of the mightiest sovereigns known to history. That claim rests securely on the basis of his extraordinary natural gifts, his original ideas, and his magnificent achievements." (*Akbar the Great Mogul*, pp. 352-3.)

*Ishwari Prasad* : "Dr. Vincent Smith, relying upon Jesuit sources, dwells upon Akbar's artfulness and duplicity in state craft and speaks of his 'tortuous diplomacy and perfidious action' . . . . . Dr. Smith forgets that Akbar's great contemporary Elizabeth lied shamelessly, and Green goes so far as to assert that in the profusion and recklessness of her lies she stood without a peer in Christendom. The vile methods and intrigues of other monarchs in France, Spain, and elsewhere are too well known to need mention. Akbar was undoubtedly superior to his contemporaries both in intellect and character, and his policy was far more humane than theirs. Against the few acts of inhumanity and breach of faith attributed to him by Dr. Smith it is possible to mention a hundred deeds of generosity and benevolence. *Accurate and impartial research by whomsoever conducted will reveal Akbar to have been in many respects a greater man than his European contemporaries.*" (*A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, pp. 436-7).

*Laurence Binyon* :—"His greater achievement as a ruler was to weld this collection of different states, different races, different religions, into a whole. It was accomplished by elaborate organisation,—Akbar had an extraordinary genius for detail—still more by the settled policy which persuaded his subjects of the justice of their ruler. Though a foreigner, he identified himself with the India he had conquered. And much of his system was to be permanent. The principles and practice worked out by Akbar and his ministers were largely adopted into the English system of government. (pp. 8-9) There is something engaging in Akbar's faults and weaknesses, which were not petty, but rather belonged to the things which made him

great. He was above all things human." (Akbar, p. 23). He also thinks Smith "curiously unfair to his hero." *The Times Literary Supplement*, 9 June, 1932, p. 415, reviewing Binyon's interesting study of Akbar, wrote of 'Akbar's religious attitude, on which our estimate of his character largely depends.'—"In this particular Mr. Binyon goes near indeed to the truth. He shows the great Emperor as liable from time to time to be overwhelmed by a sense of the emptiness of life, by a strong desire to find some sure abiding place, but seeking it in vain. Restlessly he turns from sect to sect in the faith in which he was reared. Finding no satisfaction in their dialectic, he summons the teachers of every religion within his call. Jain and Parsi, Brahman and Jesuit, each is heard with attention and respect ; but for one reason or another each fails to hold the Emperor. The Brahman is too subtle for his practical mind ; the Jesuit demands an obedience which he cannot give ; the Parsi attracts him most and he finds a ghostly comfort in that ceremonial. *Those who have seen in Akbar's religious search a mere political seeking for a faith in which his people might be united have surely seen but the surface of the truth, and have not penetrated, as Mr. Binyon does, to the man himself.*"

K. T. Shah : "Akbar was the greatest of the Mughals and perhaps the greatest of all Indian rulers for a thousand years, if not ever since the days of the mighty Mauryas. But, without detracting in the least from the genius of the man or the inheritance of his birth, it may yet be said that *Akbar was so great, because he was so thoroughly Indianised*. His genius perceived the possibilities, and his courage undertook the task of welding the two communities into a common Nation by the universal bond of common service and equal citizenship of a magnificent Empire. Akbar was a born master of men, and bred an autocrat, in an age of despotism. It would be unjust to criticise him by the canons of another age, or from the standpoint of other ideals. Within the legitimate limits of a most searching criticism, there is much—very much indeed,—in his life and outlook and achievements, which must demand our unstinted, unqualified admiration, and little that could merit just censure." (*The Splendour that was Ind*, p. 30).

E. B. Havell : "Akbar has shared the fate of all great reformers in having his personal character unjustly assailed, his motives impugned, and his actions distorted, upon evidence which hardly bears

judicial examination. . . . . He was neither an ascetic nor a saint of the conventional type ; but few of the great rulers of the earth can show a better record for deeds of righteousness, or more honourably and consistently maintained their ideals of religious life devoted to the service of humanity. In the western sense his mission was political rather than religious ; but in his endeavours to make the highest religious principles the motive power of State policy he won an imperishable name in Indian history and lifted the political ethics of Islam into a higher plane than they had ever reached before. It does not detract from his greatness as a man and ruler that his achievements fell short of his ideals—that the Din Ilahi did not accomplish the spiritual regeneration of the ruling classes or wipe off the State all the records of previous centuries of misgovernment, and that his schemes did not embrace a full recognition of the ancient Aryan system of self-government upon which the economic strength and political greatness of India stood firm, longer than has been the case with any other empire in the world. But Akbar's endeavours to realise the Aryan ideal are still worthy of imitation both by the British rulers of India and by all statesmen for whom politics is a religion rather than a game of craft and skill." (*Aryan Rule in India*, pp. 536-7).

*Lord Tennyson* : Last but not least, Tennyson's charming colloquy "Akbar's Dream" sums up the best of Akbar in a nut-shell. A few significant verses from it may be read with profit : "His tolerance of religions," writes the anonymous editor of the poet's works ; "and his abhorrence of religious persecution put our Tudors to shame. . . . and his legislation was remarkable for vigour, justice, and humanity."

Akbar to Abu-l Faḍl

[*Before the palace at Fathpur-Sikri at night.*]

"But come,

My noble friend, my faithful counsellor,  
Sit by my side while thou art one with me,  
I seem no longer like a lonely man  
In the King's Garden, gathering here and there  
From each fair plant the blossom choicest grown  
To wreath a crown not only for the King,  
But in due time for every Musalmān,  
Brāhmin, and Buddhist, Christian and Pārsee,

Thro' all the warring world of Hindustān.

Look how the living pulse of Alla beats  
Thro' all His world. If every single star  
Should shriek its claim : ' I only am in heaven,'  
Why that were such sphere-music as the Greek  
Had hardly dream'd of. There is light in all,  
And light, with more or less of shade in all.

I hate the rancour of their castes and creeds,  
I let them worship as they will, I reap  
No revenue from the field of unbelief.  
I cull from every faith and race the best  
And bravest soul for counsellor and friend.

The Christians own a Spiritual Head  
And following thy true counsel, by thine aid,  
Myself am such in our Islam, *for no*  
*Mirage of glory, but for power to fuse*  
*My myriads into union under one ;*  
*To hunt the tiger of oppression out*  
*From office ; and to spread the Divine Faith*  
*Like calming oil on all their stormy creeds,*  
And fill the hollows between wave and wave ;  
To nurse my children on the milk of Truth,  
And alchemise old hates into the gold  
Of Love, and make it current ; and beat back  
The menacing poison of intolerant priests,  
Those cobras ever setting up their hoods—  
One Alla ! One Khalifa !”





SHARMA: *Crescent in India*



*By Courtesy of the Victoria  
and Albert Museum, Bombay.*

Jahangir

## CHAPTER XIV

### FRUITION OF THE EMPIRE

The reign of Jahāngīr (1605-27) saw the fruition of the Empire which Akbar had so gloriously rebuilt out of the slender resources left to him by his ill-fated father. The past half-a-century of remarkable reconstruction had established the Empire on secure foundations, which were not to be shaken at least for a century, in spite of numerous rebellions and wars of succession. More than anything else, Akbar's policy of conciliation and concord, begun with his marriage with the Amber princess, had in Dr. Beni Prasad's words, "symbolised the dawn of the new era in Indian politics; it gave the country a line of remarkable sovereigns; it secured to four generations of Mughal Emperors the services of some of the greatest captains and diplomats that medieval India produced." Add to this, the legacy of peace and wealth that Akbar had bequeathed to his immediate successor, and we have a fairly complete picture of the favourable auspices under which Jahāngīr opened his prosperous career.

#### *Early career of Jahāngīr :*

The early career of Prince Salim up to the death of Akbar, already traced under the previous reign, may be here briefly recounted: Salim was born on 30 August, 1569, in the thirteenth year of Akbar's reign. Akbar was at that time twenty-seven years of age. Salim's mother was the Rajput princess (daughter of Rāja Bhār Mal of Amber), whom Akbar had married in 1562. All previous children of the Emperor having died in their infancy, he had besought the blessings of the famous Sheikh Salim Chishti, after whom the new child was called Muhammad Sultan Salim. Though Akbar was himself illiterate, he never neglected the education of his children. Under the able guardianship, of Bairām Khān's son, Abdur Rahmān Khān, who was an accomplished scholar, Prince Salim 'learnt Turkish which served him later as the medium of conversation with John Hawkins and as the means of confidential consultation with one of his servants, when held in custody by Mahābat Khān. He picked up a fair

acquaintance with Hindi and delighted in Hindi songs. He developed a somewhat poetic disposition, paraded his skill in versification, and sowed his talk with poetic quotations.' By nature as well as nurture Salim possessed a strong and virile constitution, though he undermined it later by excessive indulgence and drink.

At the age of fifteen Salim was betrothed to his cousin, Mān Bai, daughter of Rāja Bhagwān Dās of Amḁr. The marriage took place on 13 February, 1585, the marriage portion being fixed at two crores of *tanikās*. Both the Hindu and Muslim wedding ceremonies were observed. Prince Khusru, born on 6 August, 1587, was destined to play a prominent though tragic rôle in history. Mān Bai came to be called Shāh Begam after this. She committed suicide, in a fit of melancholia, in 1604. Meanwhile, Salim's seraglio had grown considerably. In 1586 he had married Jagat Gosāin or Jodh Bai, daughter of Udai Singh, and others. According to Father Xavier, in 1597 Prince Salim had no less than twenty 'lawful wives.' His marriage with Mihr-unnisa (Nūr Jahān) will be dealt with later. "Concubines raised the harem to the monstrous number of 300." Prince Parvez was born of Sahib-i-Jamāl on 2 October, 1589. Khurram (meaning Joyous; Shāh Jahān) was born on 5 January, 1592, of Jagat Gosāin (Jodh Bai). Shāhryar was born of a concubine in 1605.

In 1577 Salim was elevated to the rank of 10,000, while his brothers, Murād and Dāniyal, held only ranks of 7,000 and 6,000 respectively. In 1585 they received other insignia, and promotion to 12,000, 9,000, and 7,000 in order. But though during the next thirteen years Prince Salim lived in close association with Akbar, "the prevailing mist of political intrigue and chicane gradually clouded their relations, estranged their hearts, and ultimately involved them in a bitter wrangle."

*Salim's Revolt* : The story of Salim's revolt has already been recounted in detail earlier. As early as 1591 he showed an indecent haste to succeed to his father's power and position. Badāuni accuses him of poisoning Akbar; but, says Dr. Beni Prasad, "the suspicion was unjust, but the illness (of Akbar) was a serious one." When Akbar left for the south, Salim was in charge of the north, and particularly commissioned to invade Mewār. But he misused this confidence and chose to rebel. His revolt kept the Empire in trepidity for five years, but it never seriously jeopardised the stability

of the government. Akbar's personality and his brilliant successes had won him the enthusiastic admiration and affection of his subjects. His vast resources in men, money and materials, were more than enough to stamp out any rising within a short time. But his paternal tenderness kept him from making short work with Salim. The Prince, on his part, was also aware of the weakness of his position and shrank from carrying matters to extremes. He hesitated, and temporised, and occasionally even shook off the influence of his favourites and submitted to his father. Nevertheless, in 1601, he assumed independence, set up a mock Court at Allahābad, appropriated 30 lakhs of rupees from the treasury of Bihar, and bestowed *jagirs* and titles on his supporters. He gathered together a force of 30,000 men, with the only object of 'paying his respects to his father' ! But Akbar's dignified self-assurance soon brought him to his senses and he was conciliated with the governorship of Bengal and Orissa. Here is Ināyatu-lla's testimony :—

'When the Emperor was at Akbarābad (Agra), the Prince wrote to request the honour of an audience, and proceeded so far as Etāwa for the purpose : but here doubts were suggested to him by some ill-inclined persons, and he feared to advance any further. His Majesty was no sooner made aware of this circumstance, than he wrote to the Prince, that "if he were earnest in his wish to pay his respects, he ought to display his confidence by doing so *alone*, and dismiss his attendants to their *jagirs* ; if, on the contrary, suspicion withheld him, he had better retire to Allahābad, there to reassure his heart, and repair to Court when he was able to do so with full trust and confidence." The Prince, alarmed at this kind yet disdainful communication, instantly despatched *Mir Sadr-i-Jahān*, who was the chief judiciary of the Imperial dominions, and His Majesty's agent with the Prince, to his august father, charged with the most submissive apology, and referring to the Mir's own observation in testimony of his sense of duty and allegiance. He then set towards Allahābad, and meanwhile an Imperial *firmān* was issued, investing him with the government of Bengal and Orissa, and directing him to despatch his officers to take possession of those two provinces. Rāja Mān Singh was, at the same time, ordered to transfer the provinces, and to return to Court.'

Despite this, however, Salim again lapsed into his rebellious ways. This occasioned the summoning of Abu-l Faḍl from the south, and his shameful assassination by the agent of the intractable Prince. Details thereof have already been given. This tragedy was enacted in August 1602. Though Salim deserved condign punishment, "the father and statesman in Akbar overcame the judge."

Dāniyal was fast sinking into the grave on account of his own vices. Salim's children were too young to supersede him. Besides, Salim was still the favourite of the harem. So, as Ināyatu-lla has recorded, 'The Sultāna Salimā Begam, having interceded between His Majesty and the young Prince Salim, reconciled the monarch to the wonted exercise of paternal affection, while at the same time she also procured for Salim the pardon of Akbar's august mother.'

*Plot to Supersede Salim* : In 1603, when he was asked for a second time to march on Mewar, Salim again prevaricated and temporised. Finally, he made towards Allahābad under the pretext of collecting forces ; and soon reverted to his refractory ways. There was evidently no end to Akbar's sorrow in his declining age. His great courtiers and friends had died one after another : Bīr Bal in 1586, followed closely by Todar Mal and Bhagwān Dās ; Sheikh Mubārak (father of Abu-l Faḍl and Faizi) in 1593 ; Faizi in 1595, and Abu-l Faḍl in 1602. In this forlorn state, Akbar's mind was tortured at the ungrateful and treasonable conduct of his heir-apparent. Naturally, the thoughts of the ambitious, under these circumstances, turned to Prince Khusru (Salim's eldest son). He was the nephew of Rāja Mān Singh, and son-in-law of Mirza Aziz Koka—two of the most powerful grantees of the Empire. Khusru was seventeen years of age, handsome in appearance, agreeable in manners, and possessed an irreproachable appearance, and found such eminent champions. But it is impossible to say how far Akbar countenanced this plot to supersede his favourite son. He made one last attempt (in August 1604) to overawe him into submission, or compel him into final surrender. But the gods intervened. Inclement Nature impeded the progress of his arms, the imminent death of his aged mother, Maryam Makāni, necessitated his sudden retreat to Agra. Prince Salim was quick to apprehend the danger he was in. He found it expedient to follow his father to the capital, to share in the family bereavement. After the interchange of ceremonial graces, Akbar reprimanded him severely and placed him in confinement under the care of physicians. Wine and evil company had deranged his mind, and hence he was deprived of both for a while. Salim passed ten long days in humiliation and repentance. Close on the heels of these events came Akbar's last illness, and finally death in October 1605. Of the conspiracy that surrounded Akbar's death-bed we have already spoken. Only the

main circumstances may be here recounted. In the end the plot to supersede Salim was frustrated.

### *Accession and Outlook :*

According to Dr. Beni Prasad, Salim mounted his father's throne in Agra Fort on Thursday, 24 October 1605, when he had completed thirty-six years of his age. The *Wakiāt-i Jahāngiri*, however, says : 'On Thursday, the 8th Jumada-s Sani, 1014 Hijra (12 October 1605), I ascended the throne at Agra, in the thirty-eighth year of my age.' He assumed the name and title of Nuru-d dīn Muhammad Jahāngīr Pādshāh Ghāzī, and in the words of Asad Beg, began to win the hearts of all the people and to rearrange the withered world.

'He honoured many of the greatest nobles and powerful ministers and brave youths with honourable titles and acceptable dignities ; for the consolation of the hearts of his people he suspended the Chain of Justice with golden bells, and removed the rust of oppression from the hearts of his people . . . . In the first few days he repealed and gave up all transit duties and fees, the poll-tax on Hindus and tax on orphans' property, and remitted them throughout the whole of the hereditary dominions. He also remitted and removed, root and branch, the whole of the duties and imposts levied on the produce of the sea or of mines, so that throughout the whole of Hindustan, and wherever the jurisdiction of the Emperor extended, no one could so much as name them.'

A word of comment is needed on the bestowal of some of the 'honourable titles and acceptable dignities referred to above. Under the circumstances that heralded the new régime there were bound to be some *parvenus* who came to the fore only on account of indiscriminate support of their patron. The most notorious example of this was the promotion of Bīr Singh Bundela, the murderer of Abu-l Faḍl. He was raised to the 'dignity' of a commander of 3,000. On the other hand, Abdur Rahmān Khān, the son of the murdered victim, was worthily elevated though, in the first instance, only to the rank of 2,000. A third accession to the nobility worthy of mention was Mirza Ghiyās Beg, a Persian adventurer who was destined to become famous as *Itimad-ud-daulah*, the father of Nūr Jahān. At present he was only a commander of 1,500. Khān-i-zamān Aziz Koka and Rāja Mān Singh suffered inevitable eclipse.

### *Twelve Institutes :*

Jahāngīr's outlook as a ruler may be gathered from the following :—

'I established twelve ordinances to be observed, and to be the common rule of practice throughout my dominions,' states the Emperor in his *Wakiat-i-Jahāngiri*.

1. *Prohibition of cesses (zakāt)* : 'I forbade the levy of duties under the names of *tamghā* and *mir-bahri*, together with the taxes of all descriptions which the *jagirdars* of every *subah* and *sarkar* had been in the habit of exacting for their own benefit.

2. *Regulation about highway robbery and theft* : In those roads which were the scenes of robbery and theft, and in those portions of roads which were far from habitations, the *jagirdars* of the neighbourhood were to build a *Sarai* or a mosque, and they were to sink a well, to be the means of promoting cultivation, and to induce people to settle there. If these places were near to *khālṣa* lands, the Government officials were to carry out these provisions.

3. *Free inheritance of property of deceased persons* : *Firstly*. No one was to open the packages of merchants on the roads without their consent. *Secondly*. When any infidel or Musalman died in any part of my dominions, his property and effects were to be allowed to descend by inheritance, without interference from any one. When there was no heir, then officers were to be appointed to take charge of the property, and to expend it according to the law of Islam, in building mosques and *sarais*, in repairing broken bridges, and in digging tanks and wells.

4. *Of wine and all kinds of intoxicating liquors* : Wine, and every sort of intoxicating liquor is forbidden, and must neither be made nor sold ; although I myself have been accustomed to take wine, and from my eighteenth year to the present, which is the 38th year of my age, have regularly partaken of it.....

5. *Prohibiting of the taking possession of houses, and of cutting of the noses and ears of criminals* : No one was to take up his abode in the dwelling of another. I made an order prohibiting every one from cutting off the noses or ears of criminals for any offence, and I made a vow to heaven that I would never inflict this punishment on any one.

6. *Prohibiting of ghasbi* : The officers of the *khālṣa* lands and the *jagirdars* are not to take the lands of the *rai-yats* by force, and cultivate them on their own account. The collectors of the *khālṣa* lands and the *jagirdars* are not without permission to form connexions with the people in their districts.

7. *Building of hospitals and appointment of physicians to attend the sick* : Hospitals were to be built in large cities, and doctors were to be appointed to attend the sick. The expenses were to be paid from the royal treasury.

8. *Prohibiting of slaughter of animals on certain days* : In imitation of my honoured father, I directed that every year from the 18th Rabi'u-l awwal, my birth-day, no animals should be slaughtered for a number of days corresponding to the years of my age. In every week, also, two

days were to be exempted from slaughter : Thursday, the day of my accession, and Sunday, the birth-day of my father.

9. *Respect paid to Sunday* : He (my father) used to hold Sunday blessed, and to pay it great respect, because it is dedicated to the great Luminary, and because, it is the day on which the creation was begun. Throughout my dominions this was to be one of the days in which killing animals is interdicted.

10. *General confirmation of mansabs and jagirs* : I issued a general order that the *mansabs* and *jagirs* of my father's servants should be confirmed, and afterwards I increased the old *mansabs* according to the merit of each individual.....

11. *Confirmation of aima lands* : The *aima* and *madadma'sh* lands throughout my dominions, which are devoted to the purposes of prayer and praise, I confirmed according to the terms of the grant in the hands of each grantee. Miran *Sadr-i-jahān*, who is of the purest race of Saiyids in Hindustan, and held the office of *Sadr* in the days of my father, was directed to look after the poor every day.

12. *Amnesty for all prisoners in forts and in prisons of every kind* : All prisoners who had been long confined in forts or shut up in prisons, I ordered to be set free.'

Sir Henry Elliot's comments on these ordinances give a wholly distorted picture of Jahāngīr and the Mughals. The prospects of a reign so well begun were marred by the rebellion of the Emperor's eldest son, Prince Khusru.

*Khusru's Revolt* : Khusru was a very popular figure. Terry describes him as 'a gentleman of a very lovely presence and fine carriage, so exceedingly beloved of the common people, that as Suetonius writes of Titus, he was *amor et deliciae*, &c., the very love and delight of them....He was a man who contented himself with one wife, which with all love and care accompanied him in all his straits, and therefore he would never take any wife but herself, though the liberty of his religion did admit of plurality.' "With all his personal charm, natural talents, fine education, and blameless life," Dr. Beni Prasad writes, "he was an immature youth of fiery temper and weak judgment—just the type of mind, which, joined with the advantages of high station and popularity, forms the most convenient point for intrigue and conspiracy."

On 16 April, 1606, evening, he escaped from semi-confinement, under the pretext of visiting his grand-father Akbar's tomb ; really he made his way to the Punjab gathering troops with the help of Mirza Hasan (son of the powerful noble Mirza Shāh Rukh). Although the rebellious prince was only following in the footsteps of



his father, the reflections of Jahāngīr on his recalcitrancy are worthy of notice, if only as a sample of the change that authority brings over the character and outlook of persons.

‘In the first year after my accession,’ he writes, ‘Khusru, influenced by the petulance and pride which accompany youth, by his want of experience and prudence, and by the encouragement of evil companions, got some absurd notions into his head. . . . They never reflected that sovereignty and government cannot be managed and regulated by men of limited intelligence. The Supreme Dispenser of Justice gives this high mission to those whom He chooses, and it is not everyone that can becomingly wear the robes of royalty. The vain dreams of Khusru and his foolish companions could end in nothing but trouble and disgrace. My distress arose from the thought that my son, without any cause or reason, had become my enemy, and that if I did not exert myself to capture him, dissatisfied and turbulent men would support him, or he would of his own accord go to the Uzbegs or Kazilbashes, and thus dishonour would fall upon my throne.’

There is little interest in the details of the struggle. It terminated within three weeks (6-27 April, 1606). The governor of Lahore refused to open the gates for the rebel Prince, who was captured while trying to cross the Chenab.

‘Before the defeat of Khusru, an order had been issued to all the *jagirdars*, road-keepers, and the ferry-men in the Punjab, informing them of what had happened, and warning them to be careful. On 3rd Muḥarram, 1015 A. H., Khusru was brought into my presence in the garden of Mirza Kāmran, with his hands bound and a chain on his leg, and he was led from the left side, according to the rule of Chengiz Khān. . . . I attributed my success gained in this expedition to Sheikh Farid, and I dignified him with the title of *Murtaza Khān*. To strengthen and confirm my rule, I directed that a double row of stakes should be set up from the garden to the city, and that the rebels should be impaled thereon, and thus receive their deserts in this most excruciating punishment. The landholders between the Chenab and Bihar who had proved their loyalty, I rewarded by giving to each one of them some lands as *madad-ma'ash*.’

Guru Arjun, the head of the Sikh community, was sentenced to death, as an accomplice of the rebel Prince, and his property including his hermitage was confiscated. His offence consisted in giving Rs. 5000 to Khusru, which the Guru justified on grounds of his *dharma* and gratitude for past kindnesses received from Akbar, ‘and not because he was in opposition to thee.’ Jahāngīr, in the first instance, had only fined him two lakhs of rupees, and ordered him to expunge from the *Granth Sāhib* passages opposed to the Hindus and the Musalmans. But to this Guru Arjun replied :

'Whatever money I have is for the poor, the friendless and the stranger. If thou ask for money, thou mayest take what I have ; but if thou ask for it by way of fine, I shall not give thee even a *Kauri* (shell), for a fine is imposed on wicked worldly persons, and not on priests and anchorites. And as to what thou hast said regarding the erasure of hymns in the *Granth Sāhib*, I cannot erase or alter an iota.... The hymns which find a place in it are not disrespectful to any Hindu incarnation or Muhammadan prophet. It is certainly stated that prophets, priests, and incarnations are the hand-work of the Immortal God whose limit none can find. My main object is the spread of truth and destruction of falsehood, and if, in pursuance of this object, this perishable body must depart, I shall account it great good fortune.'

Commenting on this Dr. Beni Prasad observes : "The melancholy transaction has been represented by Sikh tradition as the first of the long series of religious persecutions which the Khālśa suffered from the Mughal Emperors. In reality, it is nothing of the kind. Without minimising the gravity of Jahāngīr's mistake, it is only fair to recognize that the whole affair amounts to a single execution, due primarily to political reasons. No other Sikhs were molested. No interdict was laid on the Sikh faith. Guru Arjun himself would have ended his days in peace if he had not espoused the cause of a rebel." V. A. Smith also writes, "The punishment, it will be observed, was inflicted as a penalty for high treason and contumacy, and was not primarily an act of religious persecution."

Khusru himself was blinded and imprisoned ; subsequently he partially recovered his sight, but not his liberty.\* He was destined

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\* The blinding of Khusru was the result of another insurrection attempted in his favour. The plot was hatched when Jahāngīr had been away in Kabul, to assassinate him on one of his hunting expeditions and place Khusru on the throne. There were, however, too many conspirators and the whole plan was betrayed to Jahāngīr. The ring leaders were caught and executed. The Prince was further victimised as a result of the excessive solicitude of his well-wishers. The *Intikhab-i Jahāngīr-Shāhi* gives the following account of the blinding :

'His Majesty ordered Prince Khusru to be deprived of his sight. When the wire was put in his eyes, such pain was inflicted on him, that it is beyond all expression. The Prince, after being deprived of sight, was brought to Agra ; and the paternal love again revived. The most experienced physicians were ordered to take measures to heal the eyes of the Prince, that they might become as sound as they were before. One of the physicians of Persia, Hākim Sadra by name, undertook to cure the Prince within six months. By his skill, the Prince recovered his original power of vision in one of his eyes, but the other remained a little defective in that

to be a pawn in the political game, ultimately to be disposed off under very tragic and suspicious circumstances.

### *Wars of Conquest :*

The principal wars under Jahāngīr were those leading to the final subjugation of Mewār in 1614, the conquest of Ahmednagar in 1616, the capture of Kāngra in 1620, and the loss of Kandahār in 1622. There were also a few others relating to minor conquests and insurrections which will be related in due course.

*Mewār* : Dr. Beni Prasad writes :—"No community that ever existed can boast of a more romantic history, of more heroic exploits, of a prouder sense of honour and self-respect than the Rajputs of medieval India. . . . As one glides through the Rajput tradition, the mind staggers at the heights of valour, devotion, and altruism to which humanity can soar. The Rajput spirit appears in its very quintessence in the chequered annals of Mewār. . . . Their (Shisodias) intimate knowledge of the crags and defiles, narrow, obscure passes and hidden, mysterious path-ways, was of the highest value to the Rajputs in their days of adversity. But for them, the history of Mewār might have run a different course.

"Through Mewār or close to her boundary passed the highways of commerce between the fertile Gangetic plains and the emporiums of trade on the western coast. So long as Mewār was independent, the Merchants of the Delhi Empire could not expect on the highways adequate security of person and property or freedom from vexatious tolls. That was one reason why the Mughal Emperors could never reconcile themselves to the idea of an independent Mewār. There was, of course, the imperialistic motive which prompted the extension of the last relics of Rajput independence, but in fairness to the Mughals it is necessary to emphasize the economic cause which has generally been overlooked by historians."

We have already traced the history of the Rajputs under Akbar. It will not, however, be out of place here to recall to mind Col. Tod's oft quoted eulogium:

"Had Mewār possessed her Thucydides or her Xenophon, neither the wars of the Peloponnesus nor 'the Retreat of the Ten Thousand,' would have yielded more diversified incidents for the Historic Muse, than the deeds of this brilliant reign (of Pratāp) amid the many vicissitudes of Mewār. Undaunted heroism, inflexible fortitude, that which 'keeps honour bright,' perseverance with fidelity such as no nation can boast, were

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respect, and also became smaller than its natural size. After the lapse of the assigned time, the Prince was presented to His Majesty, who showed the physician great favour, and honoured him with the title of *Masih-zamān*,'—E. & D.

opposed to soaring ambition, commanding talents, unlimited means, and the fervour of religious zeal; all, however, insufficient to contend with one unconquerable mind. There is not a pass in the alpine Aravelli that is not sanctified by some deed of Pratāp—some brilliant victory and often some glorious defeat. Haldighāt is the Thermopylæ of Mewār; the field of Dewir her Marathon."

But all this was to suffer eclipse in the present reign. On the banks of the Peshola, the dying Pratāp, like Hemilcar to Hannibal, had sworn his son and nobles 'by the throne of Bāppā Rāwul' to eternal enmity with the Mughal. Amar Singh, however, though undoubtedly great in many ways, was obliged to bow his proud head before Khurram.

On his accession, Jahāngīr, as if to make amends for his own dereliction in his father's régime, immediately despatched an army of 20,000 horse against Mewār, under the command of Prince Parvez and Asaf Khān (Jaffar Beg)—not to be confounded with the more famous brother of Nūr Jahān. The armies encountered each other at Dewir; the engagement is one of the disputed battles in history. Both sides claimed the victory. But, whatever be the truth, on account of the situation created by Khusru's rebellion, Parvez and his forces were recalled to the capital: 'all was stopped by the unhappy outbreak of Khusru,' writes Jehāngīr. 'I was obliged to pursue him to the Punjab, and the capital and interior of the country were denuded of troops. I was obliged to write to Parvez, directing him to return to protect Agra and the neighbourhood, and to remain there: so the campaign against the Rāṇa was suspended.' A second expedition was sent two years later (1608) under the promising command of Mahābat Khān. The entire force consisted this time of 12,000 horse, 500 *tehadis*, 2,000 musketeers, 60 elephants, 80 pieces of small artillery mounted on camels and elephants. Twenty lakhs of rupees were allotted for expenses. Yet, while the Mughals won sporadic victories, they failed to make effective headway in the enemy's country. The next year (1609) Mahābat Khān was replaced by Abdullah Khān in command. The latter is described as 'a valorous soldier, a rash commander, and a cruel and ruthless sort of man.' From Kumbhalmir, the rock-fortress built by Rāṇa Kumbha (1443-58), he made such a dash upon Amar Singh, that the latter came near to losing his life. The war went on with varying fortunes on either side, until the recall of Abdullah Khān to the South on account of the exigencies of the Deccan campaign (to be noticed presently).

After a short experiment with Rāja Basu, the command finally (1613) came to Khān-i Āzam Aziz Koka (Khusru's father-in-law): 'one of the hypocrites and old wolves of this State' (as Jahāngīr called him) and Prince Khurram. The two inevitably quarrelled, and the former was recalled and placed in confinement in the fort of Gwalior (April 1614). Khurram's charge against him was that he was 'spoiling matters simply on account of the connexions he had with Khusru's men,' and that his presence was 'in no way fitting.' However, he was soon set free.

Khurram, now left in absolute command, conducted the campaign with consummate ability. He reduced the Rājā to great straits by devastating his country and cutting off his supplies. In fact, Amar Singh found himself in the same plight as his father in 1579-80. In the words of Jahāngīr :

'Being helpless, he resolved to succumb, and to do homage. He sent his maternal uncle Subh Karan, and Hardās Jhāla one of his most trusty and intelligent servants, praying my son to overlook his offences, and to give him an assurance of safety under the princely seal; he would then wait upon him in person to pay homage, and would send his son and heir-apparent to the Imperial Court so that he might be classed among the adherents of the throne like all other *rājas*. He also begged that on account of old age he might be excused from proceeding to Court. My son wrote me the particulars in a despatch. Rājā Amar Singh, and his ancestors, relying upon the security of his mountains and his home, had never seen any of the Kings of Hindustan, and had never shown obedience: but now in my fortunate reign he had been compelled to make his submission.'

Jahāngīr graciously accepted the submission and even restored Chitor to the Rājās, but with the express condition that it should neither be fortified afresh, nor even repaired. In utter humiliation Rājā Amar Singh, some time after, abdicated in favour of his eldest son Karan Singh; the Rājās ever after remained loyal to the Mughals until the blind fanaticism of Aurangzeb again drove Rājā Rāj Singh into open rebellion. Meanwhile, Karan Singh was placed 'in the right hand of the circle in the *darbār* and presented with a superb dress of honour and a jewelled sword. In March, 1615, at the next *nauroz* celebrations, he received the rank of 5,000 *zāt* and *sawār*; and what is more, two life-size equestrian statues of Amar Singh and Karan were made, in appreciation of their valour, and set in the palace garden within view of the *jarokha* window at Agra. When Karan left for his home, he received by way of a farewell

gift, a horse, a special elephant, a dress of honour, a string of pearls of the value of Rs. 50,000 and a jewelled dagger worth Rs. 2,000. Jahāngīr calculated that 'from the time of his waiting on me till he obtained leave, what he had, in the shape of cash, jewellery, etc., was of the value of Rs. 2,00,000, with 110 horses, five elephants, in addition to what my son Khurram bestowed on him at various times.' But for the loss of dignity and freedom, the proud Rāṇa could never be compensated.

*Ahmednagar* : It will be remembered that Akbar had hastily concluded his Deccan campaign with the siege of Asīrgarh (1601) on account of Salim's rebellion in the north. Since then, Malik Ambar, an able Abyssinian in the service of Ahmednagar, had done much to consolidate the position of the Nizām-Shāhi in the south. He had both military and administrative talent, and had remodelled the revenue system of his state on the principles of Rāja Todar Mal. He was a master of the military tactics of the Marathas, and took the fullest advantage of the political situation as well as of the peculiar strategic resources of his own country and men. He now set himself the task of recovering the dominion lost to the Mughals.

Burhānpur was the Mughal head-quarters in the south. There the puppet Prince Parvez held his petty court; or, as Sir Thomas Roe puts it, 'the prince hath the name and state, but the Khān (khānan) governs all.' From 1608-15 the inane campaign dragged on, noble succeeding noble as commander; but all equally futile. The war was carried on on two fronts: (1) against the enemy, and (2) within the Mughal camp itself (viz. of mutual recrimination among the nobles!) From 1608-10 the Khān-khānan was in command: from 1610-12 Khān Jahān Lodi with the assistance of Khān Zamān, Mān Singh and Abdullah Khān (of Mewār fame). At the end of this period the Khān-khānan was again appointed to the southern command. This time he retrieved his position, mainly on account of disunity in the enemy's camp. He was continued till 1616, when Prince Khurram, ambitious to win laurels, took his place.

Towards the close of October, 1616, Khurram's camp equipage started from Ajmer for the Deccan. Next month the Prince was honoured with the title of Shāh or King, "which no Timurid prince had ever received," and loaded with presents he set out on his grand campaign. In Roe's estimate one of the swords he received was valued at Rs. 1,00,000, and another dagger was worth Rs. 40,000. Jahāngīr also prepared to move south, on Tuesday, 10 November, 1616. The whole pageant of his march has

been well described by Sir Thomas Roe and Terry, his chaplain, who were eye-witnesses. The former says, 'the vale showed like a beautiful city', and ruefully adds, 'I was unfitted with carriage and ashamed of my provision; but five years allowance would have furnished me with one indifferent, suit, sortable to others....So I returned to my poor house.' The latter writes of the camp royal 'which indeed is very glorious as all must confess, who have seen the infinite number of tents, or pavilions there pitched together, which in a plain make a show equal to a most spacious and glorious city. These tents, I say, when they are all together cover such a quantity of ground, that, I believe it is five English miles at the least, from one side of them to the other, very beautiful to behold from some hill, where they may be all seen at once.' The Imperial camp reached Māndu after four months, on 6 March, 1617, where a splendid abode had been prepared for the reception at a cost of Rs. 3,00,000.

Prince Khurram, who marched in advance, was joined by Karan Singh (of Mewār) with 1,500 Rajput horse. They reached Burhānpur on 6 March, 1617. But in spite of the pompous equipage, or because of it, the Mughals won their objective without striking a blow. Peace was restored on the restoration of the Bālāghāt territory, recently seized by Malik Ambar, the delivery of the keys of Ahmednagar and other strongholds, and the payment of tribute by the Deccan chiefs.

Shāh Khurram returned to the Imperial camp at Māndu on 12 October 1617, with treasures and 'offerings such as had never come in any reign or time.' "Altogether his presents were estimated at Rs. 2,260,000." 'After he had performed the dues of salutation and kissing the ground,' writes Jahāngīr, 'I called him up into the *jarokha*, and with exceeding kindness and delight rose from my place and held him in the embrace of affection. In proportion as he strove to be humble and polite, I increased my favours and kindness to him and made him sit near me.' He was, besides, promoted to the unprecedented rank of 30,000 *zāt* and *sawār*, and honoured with the title of Shāh Jahān or King of the World.

The Khān-khānan Abdur Rahim Khān (son of Bairām Khān) was appointed Governor of Berar, Khāndesh and Ahmednagar, and his eldest son, Shāh Nawāz Khān, was put in charge of 12,000 horse in newly ceded territory. Altogether 30,000 cavalry and 7,000 musketeers were left in the Deccan under reliable officers, and due provision was made for both the defence and administration of these provinces.

But this was only a truce and no permanent pacification of the Deccan. So long as the astute and intrepid Malik Ambar was alive, there could be no lasting peace. No sooner were the Imperial arms even partially withdrawn, or the political situation become

favourable, than he re-asserted his strength. By 1620 he practically won back all that he had lost by the previous treaty. This necessitated sending Shāh Jahān once more against him. Similar results followed (1621). 'After much entreaty on the part of the rebel,' writes Jahāngīr, 'it was settled that besides the territory which was formerly held by the Imperial officers, a space of fourteen *kos* beyond should be relinquished, and a sum of 50 lakhs of rupees should be sent to the Imperial treasury.' Still later, in 1623, both Bijapur and Ahmednagar sought Imperial aid, each against the other. Mahābat Khān preferred the former, which inevitably entailed hostility with the latter. Finally, Malik Ambar died in 1626, and the Deccan problem remained as unsolved as ever. The impression Malik Ambar had made, even on his enemies, is indicated by the following appreciation of him by Mutāmad Khān, the Mughal courtier-chronicler :—

'Intelligence now arrived of the death of Ambar the Abyssinian, in the 80th year of his age, on 31st Urdibihist. This Ambar was a slave, but an able man. In warfare, in command, in sound judgment, and in administration, he had no rival or equal. He well understood the predatory (*kazdaki*) warfare, which in the language of the Dakhni is called *bargi giri*. He kept down the turbulent spirits of that country and maintained his exalted position to the end of his life, and closed his career in honour. History records no other instance of an Abyssinian slave arriving at such eminence.'

*Kāgra* : This fortress was captured by Rāja Bikramjit acting under the command of Khurram. 'On Monday, 5th Muharram, the joyful intelligence of the conquest of the fort of Kāgra arrived. . . . When this humble individual, ascended the throne,' writes Jahāngīr, 'the capture of this fort was the first of all his designs. He sent Murtaza Khān Governor of the Punjab, against it with a large force, but Murtaza died before its reduction was accomplished. Chaupar Mal, son of Rāja Basu, was afterwards sent against it : but that traitor rebelled, his army was broken up, and the fall of the fortress was deferred. Not long after, the traitor was made prisoner, and was executed and went to hell. Prince Khurram was afterwards sent against it with a strong force, and many nobles were directed to support him. In the month of Shawwal 1029 H., his forces invested the place, the trenches were portioned out and the ingress of provisions was completely stopped. In time the fortress was in difficulty, no corn or food remained in the place, but for four months longer the men lived upon dry fodder, and similar things which they boiled and ate ; but when death stared them in the face, and no hope of deliverance remained, the place surrendered on Monday. Muharram 1, 1031. (16 November, 1620.)

'The extreme heat of Agra was uncongenial to my constitution, . . . . and as I had a great desire for the air of Kāgra. . . . I went to pay a



visit to the fortress. . . . After passing over about half a *kos* (from Bahlum) we mounted to the fort, and then by the grace of God prayers were said, the *khutbah* was read, a cow was killed, and other things were done, such as had never been done before, from the foundation of the fort to the present time. All this was done in my presence, and I bowed myself in thanks to the Almighty for this great conquest which no previous monarch had been able to accomplish. I ordered a large mosque to be built in the fortress.'

*Kandahār* : Kandahār, on account of its situation and importance, both commercial and military, was a constant source of friction between the Mughals and the Persians. It had been conquered, as we have seen, by Bābur in 1522, and kept by his sons, Humāyun and Kāmran. It slipped away in 1558, but was reacquired by Akbar in 1594. The revolt of Khusru, at the commencement of the present reign, gave the Persians an opportunity, and Shāh Abbās instigated the chiefs of *Khurāsān* and others to attack Kandahār. But the Mughal commander of the fort, Shāh Beg Khān, proved more than a match for the Persians. Besides, reinforcements from India soon arrived (1607), to the utter discomfiture of the enemy. Foiled in this indirect attempt, Shāh Abbās feigned indignation at the mischievous activities of his subjects, declared the attack was unauthorised, professed sincere friendship towards Jahāngīr, and hoped that the unfortunate occurrence would leave no unpleasantness behind. Jahāngīr naively accepted these diplomatic protestations of this astute neighbour, went to Kabul, directed a futile campaign against the predatory tribes of Bangash, ordered repair of the roads from Kandahār to Ghazni, and engaged himself in some beneficent activities, abolished certain customs duties at Kabul, planted trees and improved gardens, and set out for Lahore in August, 1607, after a sojourn of eleven weeks. These events occurred between the rebellion of Khusru and the plot to assassinate Jahāngīr that we have already mentioned.

In the meanwhile, Shāh Abbās, who never gave up his designs upon Kandahār, tried to cover up his sinister intentions by the exchange of diplomatic embassies, gifts, and other graces. Thus, he sent Persian ambassadors to the Mughal Court in 1611, 1615, 1616, and 1620, loaded with alluring presents and letters containing fulsome and studied flattery. A sample may be here given for more than the amusement it affords :—

' May the flower-bed of sovereignty and rule and the mead of magnificence and exalted happiness of His Honour of heavenly dignity, of

sunlike grandeur, the King whose fortune is young, of Saturn-like majesty, the renowned Prince, possessing the authority of the spheres, the Khedive, the world-gripper (Jahāngir) and country-conquering sovereign, the Prince of the exaltedness of Sikander, with banner of Darius, he who sits in the pavilion of greatness and glory, the possessor of the (seven) climes, the increaser of the joys of good fortune and prosperity, adorning the gardens of happiness, director of the rose parterre, lord of the happy conjunction (of the planets). The opener of the countenance, the perfection of Knighthood, expounder of the mysteries of the sky, the adornment of the face of learning and insight, index of the book of creation, compendium of human perfections, mirror of the glory of God, elevator of the lofty soul, increaser of good fortune and of the beneficent ascension, sun of the grandeur of the skies, the shadow of the benignity of the Creator, he who has the dignity of Jamshid among the stars of the host of heaven, lord of conjunction, refuge of the world, river of the favours of Allah, and fountain of unending mercy, verdure of the plain of purity, may his land (lit. surface) be guarded from the calamity of the evil eye; may his fountain of perfection be preserved in truth, his desire and love; the tale of his good qualities and benevolence cannot be written.'

These compliments were only a camouflage; behind the smoke screen of fine phrases the Shāh was mobilising mischief. When he thought that the time had come, owing to the internal situation in India, he did not hesitate to strike an effective blow. Kandahār was once more besieged in 1621, and finally taken by the Persians in 1622. Jahāngir thought of elaborate preparations of war, which he hoped to carry right to the Persian capital; but all this miscarried on account of Shāh Jahān's rebellion. After the capture of Kandahār, the Shāh had the temerity to write to Jahāngir, declaring that Kandahār had rightly belonged to the Persians and that Jahāngir ought to have voluntarily surrendered it to him, and expressing at the same time that 'the ever vernal flower of union and cordiality (between the two sovereigns) (would) remain in bloom and (that) every effort be made to strengthen the foundations of concord.'

*Minor Conquests* : Before we proceed to consider the circumstances and details of Shāh Jahān's revolt, we might briefly describe some of the minor conquests under Jahāngir.

In 1610, a Muslim youth named Qutb had tried to impersonate Prince Khusru and create trouble in Patna. He was soon executed and there was an end of the affair. But more formidable was the commotion further east. The refractory Afghans in Bengal had never been fully subjugated. In 1599 under their leader, Usmān Khān, they had rebelled against Mān Singh's grandson Mahā Singh.





SHARMA : *Crescent in India*



Nūr Jahān Begam

narrated, are to be connected with the advent of Nūr Jahān. She forms as it were the pivot or the principal hinge on which the history of the rest of the reign turns. The rebellions of Shāh Jahān and Mahābat Khān were primarily reactions to the workings of Nūr Jahān's influence. "No figure in medieval history," observes Beni Prasad, "has been shrouded in such romance as the name of Nūr Jahān calls to the mind. No incident in the reign of Jahāngīr has attracted such attention as his marriage with Nūr Jahān. For full fifteen years that celebrated lady stood forth as the most striking and most powerful personality in the Mughal Empire." But, as regards the many romantic legends that have gathered round her name, he very properly says, "It is all very fascinating but it is not history. Sober history unfolds a tale lacking in such picturesque romance, but full of human interest."

The best reliable and brief account of Nūr Jahān's history is contained in the following passage from Mutāmad Khān's *Ikbāl-nāmā-i Jahāngīri* :—

'Among the great events that occurred during this interval (sixth year of the reign) was the Emperor Jahāngīr's demanding Nūr Jahān Begam in marriage. This subject might be expanded into volumes, but we are necessarily confined to a limited space in thus describing the strange decrees of Fate. Mirza Ghiyās, the son of Khwāja Muhammad Sharif, was a native of Teheran. Khwāja Muhammad was, first of all, the *wazīr* of Muhammad Khān Taklu, governor of Khurāsān. After the death of Muhammad Khān, he entered the service of the renowned King Tahmasp Safawi, and was entrusted with the *wazīrship* of Yazd. The Khwāja had two sons, Aka Tahir and Mirza Ghiyās Beg. . . . After the death of his father (1577), Mirza Ghiyās Beg, with two sons and a daughter, travelled to Hindustan. On the road, as he was passing through Kandahār, by the blessing of god, another daughter was born to him. In the city of Fathpur, he had the good fortune to be presented to the Emperor Akbar. In a short time, owing to his devotion to the king's service, and his intelligence, Mirza Ghiyās Beg was raised to the office of *dīwan* or superintendent of the household. He was considered exceedingly clever and skilful, both in writing and in transacting business. He had studied the old poets, and had a nice appreciation of the meaning of words; and he wrote *shikasta* in a bold and elegant style. His leisure moments were devoted to the study of poetry and style, and his generosity and beneficence to the poor was such that no one ever turned from his door disappointed. In taking bribes, however, he was very bold and daring. When His Highness the Emperor Akbar was staying at Lahore, Ali Kuli Beg Istailu, who had been brought up under Shāh Ismail II, having come from the kingdom of Irak, became included among the number

of the royal servants, and, as Fath ordered it, married that daughter of Mirza Ghiyās Beg who had been born in Kandahār. Afterwards, in the reign of Jahāngir, he received a suitable *mansab*, and the title of *Sher-Afgan* was conferred on him. He next received a *jagir* in the province of Bengal, and departed thither to take possession. His murder of Kutbu-d-dīn Khān (Governor of Bengal) and his own death have already been related. After the death of Kutbu-d-dīn, the officials of Bengal, in obedience to royal command, sent to Court the daughter of Ghiyās Beg, who had been exalted to the title of *Itimadu-d daula*, and the King, who was greatly distressed at the murder of Kutbu-d-dīn, entrusted her to the keeping of his own royal mother. There she remained some time without notice. Since, however, Fate had decreed that she should be the Queen of the World and Princess of the Time, it happened that on the celebration of New Year's day in the sixth year of the Emperor's reign (March 1611), her appearance caught the emperor's far-seeing eye, and so captivated him that he included her amongst the inmates of his select *harem* (May 1611). Day by day her influence and dignity increased. First of all she received the title of *Nūr Mahāl*, "Light of the Harem," but was afterwards distinguished by that of *Nūr Jahān Begam*, "Light of the World." All her relations and connexions were raised to honour and wealth.....No grant of lands was conferred upon any one except under her seal. In addition to giving her the titles that other kings bestow, the Emperor granted Nūr Jahān the rights of sovereignty and government. Sometimes she would sit in the balcony of her palace, while the nobles would present themselves, and listen to her dictates. Coin was struck in her name, with this superscription: "By order of the King Jahāngir, gold has a hundred splendours added to it by receiving the impression of the name of Nūr Jahān, the Queen Begam." On all *firmāns* also receiving the Imperial signature, the name "Nūr Jahān, the Queen Begam," was jointly attached. At last her authority reached such a pass that the King was such only in name. Repeatedly he gave out that he had bestowed the sovereignty on Nūr Jahān Begam, and would say, "I require nothing beyond a *sir* of wine and half a *sir* of meat." It is impossible to describe the beauty and wisdom of the Queen. In any matter that was presented to her, if a difficulty arose, she immediately solved it. Whoever threw himself upon her protection was preserved from tyranny and oppression; and if ever she learnt that any orphan girl was destitute and friendless, she would bring about her marriage, and give her a wedding portion. It is probable that during her reign no less than 500 orphan girls were thus married and portioned.

It was reported that Sher-Afgan 'was insubordinate and disposed to be rebellious. When Kutbu-d-dīn was sent to Bengal, (August 1606) he was directed to look after Sher Afgan; if he was found to be loyal and dutiful, he was to be maintained in his *jagir*; but if not, he was to be sent to Court, or to be brought to punishment if he delayed to proceed thither. Kutbu-d-dīn formed a bad opinion of his actions and way of life. When he was summoned to appear before the viceroy, he made un-

reasonable excuses, and cherished evil designs. Kutbu-d-din made a report upon his conduct to the Emperor, and the Imperial order was given for sending him to Court; the viceroy was also directed to carry out the instructions he had received, and to bring Sher-Afgan to punishment if he manifested any disloyalty. On receiving this command Kutbu-d-din immediately proceeded to Bardwan (March, 1607) which was in the *jagir* of Sher-Afgan. Suspecting 'there was a design against him,' Sher-Afgan, in the course of conversation, 'before any one could interfere,' ran his sword into the viceroy's belly and slew him. 'Pir Khān Kashmiri, a brave officer, galloped against Sher-Afgan and struck him on the head with a sword, but Sher-Afgan returned it so fiercely that he killed his assailant at a blow. The other attendants now pressed forward in numbers, and dispatched Sher-Afgan with their swords.' (*Ikbāl-nāmā-i Jahāngiri*, E. & D., VI, pp. 402-3.)

*Controversy*: Plain and unvarnished as this tale is, there has been a great controversy over the alleged crime of Jahāngir. He has been charged with the murder of Sher-Afgan, which is believed to have brought about in order to marry Mihrunnisa. It is said, on the strength of various legends, including a statement in De Laet who says that Jahāngir was in love with Mihrunnisa "when she was still a maiden, during the life-time of Achabar (Akbar) but she had already been betrothed to the Turk Cheer Affeghan (Sher-Afgan), and hence his father would not allow him to marry her, although he never entirely lost his love for her." But Dr. Beni Prasad has very ably made out a case acquitting Jahāngir, which seems quite plausible. "An attentive study of contemporary authorities," he contends, "and of the well-established facts themselves knocks the bottom out of the whole romance, and the characters of Jahāngir and Nūr Jahān appear in a truer and more favourable light." His main line of argument may be briefly stated thus :

(a) No contemporary chronicler has made the charge against the Emperor.

(b) Even the chroniclers of Shāh Jahān's reign, who had antipathies towards Nūr Jahān, do not as much as hint at it.

(c) Contemporary European writers, although they record many another Court scandal, hardly impute the crime to Jahāngir.

(d) If Jahāngir had been early in love with Mihrunnisa, Akbar would not have appointed Sher-Afgan in the service of Salim, and the latter would not, under such circumstances, have promoted his rival in love.

(e) Nūr Jahān, from her known character, would not have submitted to the yoke of her husband's assassin; on the contrary there is



reason to believe she sincerely reciprocated Jahāngir's passionate love for her.

Dr. Ishwari Prasad's criticism of this is rather weak and unconvincing : "The improbabilities of the story itself, on which he (Beni Prasad) dwells at length", he writes, "are of little value in helping us to form a correct judgment. The evidence of the emperor's innocence adduced by Dr. Beni Prasad is of a negative character, and we cannot lightly brush aside the positive assertions of later historians, who were in a better position to state the truth in a matter like this than their predecessors. There are other considerations which militate against the theory of innocence." These are according to him—

(a) On mere suspicion the Emperor need not have authorised Kutbu-d-dīn to punish Sher-Afgan; "the cause of the royal displeasure was not even communicated to him."

(b) Jahāngir "who is usually so frank," does not say a word on this incident, "for the obvious reason that no man would relate scandals about himself."

(c) Jahāngir's silence about his marriage, "the most momentous event in his career, is wholly unintelligible."

(d) "His account of Sher Afgan's death is entirely devoid of a mention of Nūr Jahān."

(e) Why were not Mihrunnisa and her daughter entrusted to the care of her father Itimadu-d daula? Why were they kept at Court?

(f) Finally, against the possible question why the impetuous lover did not marry her all at once, but waited for four long years, he answers that, Jahāngir did not or could not marry all at once, because of the widow's natural dislike on the one hand, and Jahāngir's desire to allay suspicion, on the other.

But after all, he concludes with the observation, "A careful perusal of contemporary chroniclers leaves upon our minds the impression that the circumstances or Sher-Afgan's death are of a highly suspicious nature, *although there is no conclusive evidence to prove that the Emperor was guilty of the crime.*"

*The Junta* : The rise of Nūr Jahān led to a reshuffling of the political equation within the Empire. Her relations, particularly her father Itimadu-d daula, and her brother Asaf Khān, came into prominence as much by her influence as by their own undoubted personal abilities. The merits of the former have already been described. From 1611, the year of Nūr Jahān's marriage, to 1619, he had steadily risen in power and position, until he ranked only next to Prince Khurram. From the rank of 2000+500 in 1611, he had risen to 7000+5000 in 1616, and 7000+7000 in 1619. Asaf Khān also similarly rose from 500+100 up to 1611, 5000+3000 in 1616, and 6000+6000 in 1622. He was an accomplished man of letters,

as well as a man of political and administrative craft. Dr. Beni Prasad says, "As a financier, he stood unsurpassed in the Mughal empire." The marriage of his daughter, Arjumand Bānu Begam, with Prince Khurram, in 1612, undoubtedly heightened his prestige as well as power. This Prince, both by circumstances and ability, was marked out to be the heir-apparent. His services to the Empire have already been described in detail, up to his revolt on the eve of the Kandahār campaign in 1621. Mewār, Ahmednagar, Kāngra, proclaimed his glory to the four corners of the Empire. He had now been raised to the unprecedented rank of 30,000 *zāt* and 20,000 *sawār*, with the additional title of *Shāh Jahān*, and the *jagir* of Hisar Firoza.

Speaking of the political importance of the marriage of the niece of Nūr Jahān with Prince Khurram, Dr. Beni Prasad observes, "It symbolised the alliance of Nūr Jahān, Itimadu-d daula and Asaf Khān with the heir-apparent. For the next ten years this clique of four supremely capable persons practically ruled the empire. What has been called Nūr Jahān's sway is really the sway of these four personages."

The period of Nūr Jahān's influence is usually considered in two divisions : (i) 1611-22, when her parents were still alive and exercised a wholesome restraint upon her ambitions ; and (ii) 1622-27, when Jahāngir himself was more or less an invalid, and full vent was given to party strife and faction. In the first period also, Khurram and Nūr Jahān were in alliance ; in the second, they were antagonistic to each other. The marriage of Shāhriyar (born 1605) with Nūr Jahān's daughter by Sher-Afgan, Lādli Begam, in 1620, introduced a fresh complication.

Under these circumstances, the division of the Court into parties was inevitable. At first, there were only two : the junta and its opponents ; later when the junta itself broke up, there were more. Mahābat Khān throughout played an important rôle as an indefatigable opponent of the *parvenus*, as he considered Nūr Jahān's relations, and those whom she had exalted. In other words, he stood forth as the champion of the older nobility, and at one time went to the extent of advising the Emperor against the party in power. The author of the *Intikhab-i Jahāngir-Shāhi* says,

'At this time the influence of Nūr Jahān Begam had attained such a height that the entire management of the Empire was entrusted to her

hands. Mahābat Khān thought proper therefore to represent as follows : That to His Majesty and all the world it is well known that this servant Mahābat Khān was brought up only by His Majesty, and *that he has no concern with anybody else.* Everyone knows that Mahābat Khān presumes much upon His Majesty's kindness ; *and he now begs truly and faithfully to represent what he thinks proper, instigated by his loyalty, and for the sake of His Majesty's good name.....The whole world is surprised that such a wise and sensible Emperor as Jahāngīr should permit a woman to have so great an influence over him.....* He also added, that in his opinion, it was very advisable to liberate Prince Khusru from prison, and deliver him to one of the confidential servants of the throne .....His Majesty should reflect that affairs had now assumed a new aspect, and the safety of His Majesty's person and the tranquillity and peace of the country seem to depend upon the life of the prince.'

It is clear from this passage that Mahābat Khān also championed the cause of the popular and pathetic Prince Khusru, adding another candidate to the party-struggle that was brewing at the Court. But his bold counsel appears to have been taken all in good part by the Emperor, though its effect was ephemeral. The writer above cited closes with the observation, 'The Emperor acted in some measure upon the advice of Mahābat Khān, till he arrived in Kashmir ; but the influence of Nūr Jahān Begam had wrought so much upon his mind, that if 200 men like Mahābat Khān had advised him simultaneously to the same effect, their words would have made no permanent impression upon him.'

With such candour Mahābat Khān could not expect to get on well at Court in opposition to the junta. From 1605-10 he had risen from 1500 to 4000+3500 in his rank. Then came Nūr Jahān. Till 1622 he received no promotion whatsoever. On the contrary he was driven from the Deccan to the frontiers of Afghanistan, wherever the most strenuous service was needed. For such a one to stand up for the unfortunate Prince Khusru was to spoil his case. Though Jahāngīr for a time relented towards his eldest born, and allowed him some liberty, the junta contrived to undo him. Shāh Jahān was then in the good books of Nūr Jahān. Lest the prospects of the younger (Shāh Jahān) should be suddenly marred by some whimsical turn in the Emperor's affections, they contrived to transfer the prisoner, at first to Asaf Khān's custody, and thence to Shāh Jahān's. The latter, in utter disregard of all human feeling, got his eldest brother out of the way by methods in which Mughal princes were becoming more and more adept. Before he would

proceed for service in the Deccan, in 1620, Shāh Jahān insisted on taking his ill-starred brother with him. In January 1622 Jahāngīr received a report from Shāh Jahān, writing from Burhānpur, that Khusru died of a colic ! De Laet gives the following description of this strange colic :—

“Xa-Ziahan (Shāh Jahān), who was at Brampore (Burhānpur), and was acting as a jailor to his brother Gousrou (Khusru), began to make a plot whereby he might be able to get rid of his brother without incurring the suspicion of having murdered him. He took into his confidence Ganganna (Khān-khānan) and his most faithful Omerau, and then departed on a hunting expedition. His slave Reza, who had been commissioned to commit the crime, knocked at dead of night upon the door of prince Gousrou's bedroom, pretending that he and the companions whom he had brought with him were the bearers of robes and letters from the King, and that they had instructions to set the prince at liberty. The prince did not believe this story. However, Reza broke open the door, struck down the prince, who was unarmed, strangled him, placed his corpse back on his bed, and shut the door once more. ....

“Xa-Ziahan returned to the city, and sent letters to his father announcing his brother's death.... On receiving the news the king mourned deeply for the death of his son.... He summoned the father-in-law of Gousrou, Ghan Asem (Khān-i Āzam), consoled with him, and committed to his charge his grandson Sultan Bolachi (Bulagi, who was made a commander of 10,000 horse) in order that he may be responsible for his education.”

Khusru's body had been hastily buried at Burhānpur in May 1622. At Jahāngīr's desire it was disinterred and carried to Agra in June 1622, whence it was taken to Allahābad, there to be deposited by the side of his mother's tomb in Khuldābad (now known as Khusru Bāgh). “His figure,” observes V. A. Smith, “shadowy though it be, is one of the most interesting and pathetic in Indian history.”

*Jahāngīr's Illness* : Meanwhile, Jahāngīr's health was failing. Repeated visits to Kashmir and other health-resorts, the treatment of distinguished physicians, and the affectionate and wholesome attentions of Nūr Jahān, did him little good. Though he continued to live till 1627, it was already certain that he had played out his part. Effective power must now pass on to other hands. More than anybody else, both Nūr Jahān and Shāh Jahān were keenly aware of the possible developments, and as Beni Prasad puts it, “In a single empire there was no room for two such masterful spirits as Nūr Jahān and Shāh Jahān.” She, therefore, cast about

for a more pliant instrument, and found one ready in Shāhriyar the *Nashudani* (good for nothing). 'The tender age (16), docile nature, feeble mind, and imbecile character of Shāhriyar marked him out as the proper instrument for a masterful lady.' His marriage with Nūr Jahān's daughter (1620-1) has already been mentioned. At this time also, Nūr Jahān lost the wise direction and the restraining influence of both her parents who died one after another in 1621 and 1622. The time had evidently come for re-shuffling in the political arena.

The spirited and ambitious Shāh Jahān saw clearly that his chance lay in vigorous action. That is why, in 1621, he refused to be diverted into the futile Afghan campaign : that is why also he got rid of his possible rival Khusru in 1622 ; and finally, that was also the reason for his sudden rebellion in the Deccan. It was more than evident that Jahāngīr had come to know of his perfidious conduct towards Khusru ; it was more likely that Nūr Jahān would press for Shāhriyar's candidature. On Shāh Jahān's refusal to go to the frontier (a reasonable occasion to embroil the Emperor with him), she had put Shāhriyar in command, and on his failure had also invited Sultan Parvez (Jahāngīr's second son) from Bihar, where he was governor. Civil war became thus inevitable.

### *Civil War :*

The details of this revolt are of little interest. But Jahāngīr's lament over it is worth citation on account of its pathos :

'Intelligence now arrived,' he says, 'that Khurram had seized upon some of the *jagirs* of Nūr Jahān Begam and Prince Shāhriyar.... I had been offended by his delaying at the fort of Māndu, and by his improper and foolish statements in his letters, and I had perceived by his insolence that his mind was estranged. Upon hearing of this further intelligence, I saw that notwithstanding all the favour and kindness I had shown, his mind was perverted. I accordingly sent Rāja Roz-afzūm, one of my oldest servants, to inquire into the reasons of this boldness and presumption. I also sent him a *firmān* directing him to attend to his own affairs, and not to depart from the strict line of duty. He was to be content with the *jagirs* that had been bestowed upon him from the Imperial Exchequer. I warned him not to come to me, but to send all the troops which had been required from him for the campaign against Kandahār. If he acted contrary to my commands, he would afterwards have to repent..... Letters arrived from Itibār Khān and other of my officers whom I had left at Agra, stating that Khurram persisted in his perverse course, and

preferring the way of disobedience to the path of duty, had taken a decided step on the road to perdition by marching upon Agra.... A letter from Asaf Khān also arrived, stating that this ungrateful son had torn away the veil of decency, and had broken into open rebellion; that he (Asaf Khān) had received no certain intelligence of his movements, so, not considering it expedient to move the treasure, he had set out alone to join me.

'On receiving this intelligence, I crossed the river at Sultānpur, and marched to inflict punishment on this ill-starred son (*Siayah-bakht*). I issued an order that from this time forth he should be called "wretch" (*be doulat*)..... The pen cannot describe all that I have done for him, nor can I recount my own grief, or mention the anguish and weakness which oppress me in this hot climate, which is so injurious to my health, especially during these journeys and marchings which I am obliged to make in pursuit of him who is no longer my son. Many nobles, too, who have been long disciplined under me, and would now have been available against the Uzbecks and the Kazilbashs, have, through his perfidy, met with their due punishment. May God in His mercy enable me to bear up against all these calamities! What is most grievous for me to bear is this that this is the very time when my sons and nobles should have emulated each other in recovering Kandahār and Khurāsān, the loss of which so deeply affects the honour of the Empire, and to effect which this "wretch" is the only obstacle, so that the invasion of Kandahār is indefinitely postponed. I trust in God that I may be shortly relieved of this anxiety!

'On the 1st Isafandarmuz, I received a letter from Itibār Khān, informing me that the rebel had advanced with all speed to the neighbourhood of Agra, my capital, in the hope of getting possession of it before it could be put in a state of preparation. On reaching Fathpur, he found that his hope was vain, so he remained there. He was accompanied by Khān-khānān (Mirza Abdur Rahman Khān) and his son; and by many other *amirs* who held office in the Dakhin and in Gujarat, and had now entered the path of rebellion and perfidy..... The rebels took nine *lacs* of rupees from the house of Lashkar Khān, and everywhere they seized upon whatever they found serviceable in the possession of my adherents. Khān-khānān who had held the exalted dignity of being my tutor, had now turned rebel, and in the 70th year of his age had blackened his face with ingratitude. But he was by nature a rebel and traitor. His father (Bairām Khān), at the close of his days, had acted in the same shameful way towards my revered father. He had but followed the course of his father, and disgraced himself in his old age—

"The wolf's whelp will grow a wolf,  
E'en though reared with man himself."

'After I had passed through Sirhind, troops came flocking from all directions, and by the time I reached Delhi, such an army assembled, that the whole country was covered with men as far as the eye could

reach. Upon being informed that the rebel had advanced from Fathpur, I marched to Delhi.'

The remaining events may be briefly narrated. The rebels were defeated at Balochpur, to the south of Delhi (1623), and Shāh Jahān at first retired into Mālwa and thence into the Deccan. He sought in vain the help of Malik Ambar, and then fled to Bengal *via* Telingana. He occupied Bihar and captured the great fortress of Rohtas. But at Allahābad found the Imperial officers too alert (1624). Again he came back to the Deccan with better hopes of gaining support from Malik Ambar. He did form an alliance with him against Mahābat Khān who had sided with Bijapur as already stated. In 1625, however, he was seized with an illness. 'The error of his conduct,' as Muhammad Hadi puts it, 'now became apparent to him, and he felt that he must beg forgiveness of his father for his offences. So with this proper feeling he wrote a letter to his father, expressing his sorrow and repentance, and begging pardon for all the faults past and present. His Majesty wrote an answer with his own hand (March 1626) to the effect that if he would send his sons Dārā Shukoh and Aurangzeb to Court, and would surrender Rohtas and the fortress of Asir, which were held by his adherents, full forgiveness should be given him, and the country of the Bālāghāt should be conferred upon him. Upon reading this Shāh Jahān deemed it his duty to conform to his father's wishes; so, notwithstanding the love he had for his sons, he sent them to his father, with offerings of jewels, chased arms, elephants, etc., to the value of ten *lacs* of rupees. He wrote to Muzāfar Khān directing him to surrender Rohtas to the person appointed by the Emperor and then to come with Sultan Murād Bakhsh. He also wrote to Hayāt Khān directions for surrendering Asir to the Imperial officers. Shāh Jahān then proceeded to Nasik.

Thus ended the futile rebellion after three years of bloodshed and waste of men and money, to nobody's advantage but the considerable distraction and weakening of the Empire. The victories of the imperial forces had been mainly due to the exertions of the indefatigable Mahābat Khān, acting in unison with Prince Parvez. But his success was his undoing. Nūr Jahān was watching with jealousy to reduce his increasing power and prestige. She could brook nobody's rise within the Empire. His Association with Prince Parvez was particularly dangerous in her eyes. She, therefore, set

about humiliating Mahābat Khān, and in the result, again plunged the country in civil war.

*Mahābat Khān's Coup* : Mahābat Khān and Prince Parvez were together in the Deccan at Burhānpur. Nūr Jahān's first stunt was to separate the two. So Mahābat was appointed governor of Bengal, and his place with Parvez was to be taken by Khān Jahān. But the Prince was unwilling to part with the general who had become the prop of all his hopes. Parvez was the eldest son of the Emperor now alive, and since the discomfiture of Shāh Jahān he had built definite hopes of succeeding his father. Nevertheless, the Empress Begam was equally determined to have her own way. So a peremptory *fīrmān* came from the Imperial head-quarters ordering Mahābat Khān either to proceed to Bengal or to come to the Court at once. He chose the latter course, but marched with 4,000 seasoned Rajputs. Meantime, various malicious charges had been framed against Mahābat Khān, impugning his personal integrity : 'Mahābat Khān,' it was said, 'had not as yet sent to Court, the elephants obtained in Bengal, and he had realized large sums of money due to the state, and also from *jagirs*.' What was more ridiculous, 'Mahābat Khān had, without the royal permission, affianced his daughter to the son of Khwāja Umar Nakshabandi. The Emperor made a great noise about this. He sent for the young man, and having treated him with great insult and harshness, he gave orders for binding his hands to his neck, and for taking him bare-headed to prison. Fidai Khān was directed to seize what Mahābat Khān had given to the youth, and place it in the Imperial treasury.'

Mahābat Khān was not the man to put up with these calculated affronts. The Emperor at that time had just come from Kashmir, and was about to start for Kabul, with Nūr Jahān, Asaf Khān, and all his Court. The abiding place of the Emperor was on the bank of the Behat, and Asaf Khān, notwithstanding the presence of such a brave and daring enemy, was so heedless of his master's safety, that he left him on that side of the river, while he passed over the bridge to the other side, with the children and women, and the attendants and the officers. He sent over also the baggage, the treasury, the arms, etc., even to the very domestics.

'Mahābat Khān perceived that his life and honour were at stake, and that he had no resource, for he had not a single friend



left near the Emperor. With 4,000 or 5,000 Rajputs who had sworn fidelity to him, he proceeded to the head of the bridge. There he left nearly 2,000 horsemen to hold it, and to burn the bridge rather than allow any one to pass over. Mahābat Khān then proceeded to the royal quarters.' Here Mutāmad Khān, who was present in Jahāngir's camp at the moment, gives further details of how Mahābat Khān proceeded to take possession of the Emperor; throughout he acted with caution and strength, but never disrespectfully towards Jahāngir. To proceed with Mutāmad's account :—

'The servants who were in attendance on His Majesty informed him of this daring action. The Emperor then came out, and took his seat in a *pālki* which was in waiting for him. Mahābat Khān advanced respectfully to the door of the *pālki*, and said, "I have assured myself that escape from the malice and implacable hatred of Asaf Khān is impossible, and that I shall be put to death in shame and ignominy. I have therefore boldly and presumptuously thrown myself upon Your Majesty's protection. If I deserve death or punishment, give the order that I may suffer it in your presence."

'The armed Rajputs now flocked in, and surrounded the royal apartments. There was no one with His Majesty but Arab Dastghaib, . . . . . and a few other attendants. The violent entrance of the faithless dog [meaning Mahābat Khān] had alarmed and enraged His Majesty, so he twice placed his hand on his sword to cleanse the world from the filthy existence of that foul dog. But each time Mansūr Badakhshi said, "This is a time for fortitude, leave the punishment of this wicked faithless fellow to just God: a day of retribution will come." His words seemed prudent, so His Majesty restrained himself. In a short time the Rajputs occupied the royal apartments within and without, so that no one but the servants could approach his Majesty.'

Having thus secured the Emperor, Mahābat Khān realised that he ought not to allow his powerful enemies to escape. Nūr Jahān thought at first that Jahāngir had gone a hunting; but when she came to know of the real situation, she summoned the chief nobles, including her brother Asaf Khān, and addressed them in reproachful terms. "This," she said, "has all happened through your neglect and stupid arrangements. What never entered the imagination of any one has come to pass, and now you stand stricken with shame for your conduct before God and man. You must do your best to repair this evil, and advise what course to pursue." With one mind and one voice they all advised that on the morrow the forces should be drawn out, and that they should pass over the river with her to defeat the rebel and deliver His Majesty. The attempt proved

unsuccessful in spite of the great heroism displayed by Nūr Jahān. Mutāmād graphically describes the scene :

'Horsemen and footmen, horses, camels, and carriages, were in the midst of the river, jostling each other, and pressing to the opposite shore .... Seven or eight hundred Rajputs, with a number of war-elephants in their front, occupied the opposite shore in firm array. Some of our men, horse and foot, approached the bank, in broken and disordered condition. The enemy pushed forward their elephants, and the horsemen came from the rear, dashed into the water, and plied their swords. Our handful of men, being without leaders, turned and fled, and the swords of the enemy tinged the water with their blood. The Begam Nūr Jahān had in her litter the daughter of Shāhriyar, whose *anka* (or nurse) was the daughter of Shāh Nawāz Khān. The *anka* received an arrow in her arm, and the Begam herself pulled it out, staining her garments with blood. The elephant on which the Begam was riding received two sword-cuts on the trunk ; and when he turned round, he was wounded three times behind with spears. The Rajputs pushed after him with their drawn swords, and his drivers urged him on into the deep water. The horse-men then had to swim, and becoming afraid of being drowned, they turned back. The elephant swam to shore, and the Begam proceeded to the royal abode.....Asaf Khān, who was the cause of this disaster, and whose folly and rashness had brought matters to this pass, when he found that he could make no longer any resistance to Mahābat Khān, fled with his son Abu Talib, and 200 or 300 horse, *bargirs*, and servants, to the fort of Atak, which was in his *jagir*, and closed the fortress... Mahābat Khān sent a large party of the royal *ahadis* (guards), with some of his own followers, and the *zamindars* of the neighbourhood, under the command of his son and a Rajput, to invest Atak. They reduced the fort, and Asaf Khān bowed to Fate, and bound himself by promise and oath to uphold Mahābat.'

By this bold *coup de main*, Mahābat Khān secured possession of all the important personages in the Empire and became the virtual dictator. But it is very strange that within a very short time the tables should have been turned against him. It was entirely due to the cleverness and diplomacy of Nūr Jahān. Our historian says, 'Nūr Jahān Begam worked against him both in private and in public. She maintained a number of followers, and attached them to herself by money and promises. In time Hushiar Khān, her eunuch, in compliance with her letters, got together about 2,000 men in Lahore, and proceeded to meet her. A considerable number of men had also got together round the royal escort.' The exact details of the reversal are rather obscure.

Our Chronicler only says, 'His Majesty determined to hold a review of the cavalry. He gave order that all the soldiers, old and new, should

form in two lines, from the royal abode as far as they would extend. He then directed Buland Khān, one of his attendants, to go to Mahābat Khān, and tell him that His Majesty was holding a review of the Begam's troops that day. It would be better therefore for him to postpone the usual parade of the first day, lest words should pass between the two parties and strife ensue. After Buland Khān, he sent Khwāja Abūl Hasan to enforce his wish more strongly, and to urge Mahābat to go on a stage. The Khwāja, by cogent reasons, prevailed upon him; and, casting off all insolence and improper exercise of power, he went on first. His Majesty followed close after, and making no stay at the first stage, he made two stages into one, and passed over the river to Rohtas, where he found a Court ready to receive him.'

Mahābat Khān does not seem to have been so naïve a fellow as to be taken in so easily. The fact appears to be that he had acted too deferentially towards his Imperial prisoners from the very start; this gave them the necessary opportunity to make the utmost of their royal prestige. Besides, Mahābat Khān, in the face of the jealousy he evoked in the hearts of the other nobles by his sudden and unexpected success, could not hope to hold on for long. If he had near him some prince of the Imperial family, he might have rallied round him forces that now he had no chance of invoking. His *coup* was the result of a sudden impulse that had occurred to him on the spur of the moment, carried out mainly as a measure of self-defence. He had neither the heart nor the resources to carry it through to its logical conclusion, viz., a revolution. He was not another Sher Khān driving out the Emperor into exile, and establishing his own dynasty; he was a loyal servant trying to create an impression by means of a stratagem. So, when Majesty recovered itself he recoiled and mechanically carried out its behests.

These events happened in 1626. Meanwhile Shāh Jahān had proceeded to Thatta, to fish in troubled waters, and failing all, to go to Persia with a view to recover his lost position with the assistance of Shāh Abbās. But owing to the difficulties he met with on the way, and his own illness, he determined to return to the Deccan.

'Being weak and ill,' writes Mutāmad, 'he was obliged to travel in a *pālki*. He now received intelligence of the death of Prince Parvez (28 October, 1626) and this hastened his movements. He pursued the route which Mahmūd of Ghazni had taken when he plundered Somnāth, passing by Rājpipaliya, he arrived at Nasik Tirbang (Trimbak) in the Dakhin, where he had left his stores and equipage.....After this time (also) died, in the seventy-second year of his age, Khān-khānan, son of Bairām

Khān, one of the greatest nobles of the late Emperor Akbar, who had rendered honourable services and gained important victories.'

Mahābat Khān had been ordered to release Asaf Khān and others, and to march against Shāh Jahān in Thatta. He chose instead to join forces with the disappointed Prince. Mutāmad says, 'He concealed himself for some time in the hills of the Rāṇa's country, and then sent persons to Shāh Jahān to express contrition. The Prince received his apologies kindly, called him to his presence, and treated him with great favour and kindness.'

#### *Death of Jahāngīr :*

Alarmed at this dangerous combination, Nūr Jahān was preparing to suppress them, when the illness and death of Jahāngīr, on 28 October 1627, changed the whole aspect of affairs. The Emperor had been ill in Kashmir. 'He was unable to ride on horse-back, but was carried about in a *pālki*. His sufferings were great. . . . He lost all appetite for food, and rejected opium, which had been his companion for forty years. He took nothing but a few cups of the grape.' He then started on his way back to Lahore. 'On the way he called for a glass of wine ; but when it was placed to his lips, he was unable to swallow. Towards night he grew worse, and died early on the following day, the 28th Safar, 1037 A.H., in the 22nd year of his reign.'

#### *Jahāngīr and the Europeans :*

Before we can appreciate the results of Jahāngīr's reign and his character, it is necessary to review briefly his relations with the Europeans who throw ample light upon both. It would be convenient to consider these under three separate heads : (a) the Portuguese ; (b) the Jesuits ; and (c) the English.

*The Portuguese :* The Portuguese power in India was definitely on the decline, due to a variety of reasons. Perhaps two important causes of this were their religious intolerance and the absorption of Portugal by Spain, between 1580 and 1640. Other European powers like the Dutch and the English were fast out-stepping them in the East. Particularly, their piratical activities brought them into active conflict with the Mughal Empire. In spite of Jahāngīr's desire to maintain friendly relations with them, which made him send an embassy to Goa in 1607 and 1610 (under Father Pinheiro and Mukarrab

Khān), their audacity became intolerable. In 1613 the Portuguese seized four Imperial vessels, containing about three millions worth of goods, near Surat. Since their Viceroy was not amenable to reason, Mukarrab Khān, then Governor of Surat, inflicted a naval defeat on the Portuguese, in alliance with the English sea-captain Downton. This was followed by a very vigorous campaign against the Portuguese settled within the Empire, and the withdrawal of all privileges granted to them previously. The Portuguese, wherever they could be caught hold off, were arrested, and even Father Jerome Xavier was placed under the custody of Mukarrab Khān. The churches at Agra and Lahore were forcibly closed. This brought the Portuguese to their senses, and they soon opened negotiations with the Emperor. Father Xavier was released to discuss peace terms, but the Portuguese proposals were not wholly acceptable to Jahāngīr: prisoners were to be released, the Emperor was to be content with taking the Portuguese property already seized as indemnity, and the Dutch and English were to be excluded from all privileges. However, thanks to the efforts of the Jesuits, harmony was restored between the Portuguese and the Empire in September, 1615. In 1623, when Shāh Jahān, in the course of his rebellion, sought their assistance from Hugli, they refused it, but, on the contrary, they served as gunners in the Imperial army under Ibrāhim Khān.

*The Jesuits* : Jahāngīr, as we have seen, had come very early into contact with the Jesuits during his father's lifetime. He had formed a close friendship with Father Ridolfo Aquaviva, head of the First Jesuit Mission to Akbar's Court. During his revolt, as a Prince, when he set up his mock court at Allahābad, he had sought without success a mission from Goa. He had bestowed several favours and gifts, like a silver image of the infant Jesus, upon the Jesuits and their church. He had even worn round his neck a locket containing portraits of the Saviour and the Virgin, marked his letters with Christian symbols, contributed large sums for the erection of churches, and 'exhibited most edifying devotion' towards the Christian faith. The father of the Society of Jesus had an 'elegant and commodious' church at Lahore, as well as a *collegium* or priests' residence, "a comfortable building equipped with varandahs and upper and lower rooms, suitable respectively for use in the cold and hot seasons. Each department of the mission work had its appropriate and convenient accommodation as in European colleges. At Agra about

twenty baptisms took place in 1606, and when Jahāngīr was on his way to Kabul he accepted a Persian version of the Gospels and permitted the Fathers to act publicly with as much liberty as if they were in Europe. When the Emperor returned to Agra he took two of the priests with him, leaving one at Lahore to look after the congregation there. Church processions with full Catholic ceremonial were allowed to parade the streets and cash allowances were paid from the treasury for church expenses and the support of the converts."

The most remarkable indication of Jahāngīr's interest in the Jesuits was, perhaps, his permitting them to baptise his own nephews (sons of the late Prince Dāniyāl).

"The Princes clothed in Portuguese costume and wearing crosses of gold round their necks, proceeded on elephants from the palace to the church through streets packed with eager spectators. A large cortège from the Court accompanied them and some sixty Christians—including Poles, Venetians and Armenians—joined the procession on horseback. Even the Englishman Hawkins, who was then in Agra, put aside his Protestant prepossessions for the day and rode at the head of the procession with St. George's flag carried before him 'to the honour of the English nation.' At the church the Princes were received with every sign of rejoicing and the bell was rung with such violence that it broke. The ceremony itself was impressive and the demeanour of the Princes brought tears to the eyes of the spectators. When baptized, they were given, as was then the practice, new names of a European complexion." King Philip III of Spain received these tidings with great enthusiasm, and personally addressed a letter to Jahāngīr thanking him for his friendliness towards the Christians. But after all this fuss, in five years' time the Princes 'gave their crucifixes again to the Jesuits,' i.e., abjured their Christian faith, and in the words of a Jesuit writer, 'rejected the light and returned to the vomit.'

After the death of Father Xavier in 1617, and of Pinheiro in the following year, their places were taken by Fathers Corsi and Joseph de Castro. In addition to their evangelical work they were in the position of an 'agent for the Portugals.' The former has been described as 'a great column of the Mission,' and both had unique opportunities of coming into close contact with the Emperor. Corsi first came to Agra in 1604, and de Castro ten years later. The former died at the capital in 1635; the latter at Lahore, in 1646. Although both of them were Italians, their political activities were directed towards furthering the interests of the Portuguese at Court

as against those of the English. Sir Thomas Roe, who arrived in India in September 1615, in a letter written a year later, describes 'how the Portugals have crept into this kingdom and by what corners they got in ; the entrance of the Jesuits, their entertainment, privileges, practices, ends and the growth of their church, whereof they sing in Europe so loud prayses and glorious successes.' In spite of his obvious Protestant bias and opposing political interests, mutual relations between Roe and Corsi were, according to Sir Edward Maclagan, good and creditable to both.

*The English* : The first Englishman to appear before Jahāngīr was Captain William Hawkins, who arrived at Surat (in his ship *Hector*) in August 1608, with a letter from James I, King of Great Britain, asking for trade facilities. He brought with him a gift of 25,000 gold pieces, and was well received by the Emperor (April 1609), in spite of the opposition of the Jesuit Father Pinheiro who represented Portuguese interests at the Mughal Court. Hawkins could speak Turki and Persian and hence needed no interpreter.\* The bitter hostility that existed between the English and the Portuguese, on account of their rivalry at Jahāngīr's Court, is clearly discernible in the statements of Hawkins. He alleges that Father Pinheiro had bribed Mukarrab Khān to kidnap him (Hawkins), and that he had described England as a dependency of Portugal. 'The Jesuits here,' he writes from Agra (1609), 'do little regard their masses and their church matters for studying how to overthrow my affairs.' Finally, he calls them 'madde dogges, labouring to work my passage out of the world,' and says they had to be warned by the Emperor that, if aught happened to Hawkins, they would be held responsible. When a Protestant follower of Hawkins died at Agra, the Jesuits refused to allow him to be buried in the Christian cemetery. When Hawkins married an Armenian Christian lady, 'to avoid being poisoned,' they declined to perform the ceremony unless he acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope. Later, however, their relations, slightly

\* 'It was a singular situation,' observes Lane-Poole, 'for a bluff sea-captain to find himself in, in an unknown land, called upon to meet a great emperor about whom absolutely nothing was known in England. There was nothing to suggest the most distant dream that in two centuries and a half the slight introduction Hawkins was then effecting between England and India would culminate in the sovereignty of a British Queen over the whole empire where the "Light of the World" and her imperial husband then reigned.' *Medieval India*, pp. 209-300.

improved. But, none the less, when Hawkins left India, in 1611, in disgust, his mission had been thoroughly discredited on account of the Jesuits, and Father Xavier represented that some ultramontane heretics had attempted to disturb the happy progress of the Catholic faith in Mogor, but that the King on discovering their perfidy had banished them from the country.'

The next Englishman of note to appear at the Court of Jahāngīr was one Paul Canning, who too appears to have come to Agra (1612) with a further letter from King James. His experience was no better than that of his predecessor. English accounts still speak of 'those prattling, juggling Jesuits,' and their great influence at the Court. 'The lying Jesuits,' we are told, were 'feeding the King daily with presents and strange toys,' and poisoning his mind against the English. But the strained relations between the Empire and the Portuguese, to which reference has already been made, changed the whole situation for the time being (1613-15). The Jesuits with the Portuguese stood thoroughly discredited. It was at this time, when they were still 'in deep disgrace with the king and people,' that the third English 'ambassador,' William Edwardes came from Surat (1615) also with a letter from King James. But the most important and the most famous of the English representatives was Sir Thomas Roe.\* Smith describes him as 'a gentleman of good education, a polished courtier, and trained diplomatist, well qualified for the task assigned to him, which was the negotiation of a treaty giving security to English trade.' He was accompanied (since 1616)

\* 'Roe had come to complete what Hawkins had only partly succeeded in effecting. The English agents and traders were still in a humiliating situation, subject to all kinds of indignities, possessing no recognised or valid rights, and obliged to sue and bribe for such slight facilities as they could win. Their chiefs, the agents of the East India Company, had brought scorn upon their nation by "Kotowing" to the Moghal dignitaries cringing to insult, asserting no trace of dignity; and had even "suffered Blows of the porters, base Peons, and beene thrust out by them with much scorne by head and shoulders without seeking satisfaction." Englishmen were flouted, robbed, arrested, even whipped in the streets. It was evident that a different manner of man (than Hawkins or Edwardes) was needed to retrieve the indignity done to our name and honour.'—Lane-Poole, *op. cit.*, pp. 305-6; Sir Thomas Roe, according to the Directors of the E. I. Co., was a man 'of a pregnant understanding, well spoken, learned, industrious, and of a comely personage.'



by his chaplain Terry, whose account 'is far superior to that of Roe, as a description of the country and government.' He too met with difficulties similar to those of his predecessors : "when he had hopes of a speedy decision on his request, Roe found objections raised at the last moment ; 'a Jesuitical bone,' as he said, 'cast in over-night.'"

His own draft of the treaty he wanted to negotiate provided for the free access of the English to all ports belonging to the Great Mughal, including those of Bengal and Sind, and the free passage of their goods without payment of any duty beyond the usual customs ; they were to be allowed to buy and sell freely, to rent factories, to hire boats and carts, and to buy provisions at the usual rates ; while other articles directed against the confiscation of the effects of deceased factors, the obnoxious claims to search the persons of the merchants on going ashore, the opening of presents intended for the King, delays in the custom-house and other similar abuses. On the part of the English, Roe was willing to engage that they should not molest the ships of other nations, 'except the enemies of the said English, or any other that shall seek to injure them,' and that their factors while residing ashore, should 'behave themselves peaceably and civilly,' that they should do their best to procure rarities for the Great Mughal, and should furnish him (upon payment) with any goods or furniture of war that he could reasonably desire, and that they should assist him against 'any enemy to the common peace.' The Portuguese were to be admitted to enter into the said peace and league, should they be willing, but if they did not do so within six months, the English were to be permitted to treat them as enemies and make war upon them at sea, 'without any offence to the said Great King of India.'

Roe did not succeed in this, though he remained in India for over three years and went about with Jahāngīr in his southern tour (Māndu and Ahmedābad), and finally left India on 17 February 1619. He had arrived at Surat (Swally Road) on 18 September 1615. Although his mission was a failure he has recorded with grace the manner of his reception as well as departure from the Great Mughal.

'I had required, before my going,' he writes, 'leave to use the customs of my country, *which was freely granted*, so that I would perform them punctually. When I entered within the first rail, I made a reverence ; entering in the inward rail, another ; and when I came under the King, a third. The place is a great court, whither resort all sorts of people. The King sits in a little gallery overhead ; ambassadors, the great men and strangers of equality, within the innermost rail under him, raised from the ground, covered with canopies of velvet and silk, underfoot laid with gold carpets, the meaner men representing gentry, within the first rail,

the people without, in a base court, but so that all may see the King. This setting out hath so much affinity with a theatre, the manner of the King in his gallery ; the great men lifted on a stage, as actors, the vulgar gazing on, that an easy description will inform of the place and fashion. The King prevented my dull interpreter welcoming me to the brother of my master. I delivered His Majesty's letter translated ; and after my commission, whereon he looked curiously ; after my presents, which were well received. He asked some questions ; and, with a seeming care of my health [Roe had just recovered from an illness], offered me his physicians, and advising me to keep my house till I had recovered strength, and if, in the interim, I needed anything, I should freely send to him and obtain my desires. *He dismissed me with more favour and outward grace than ever was shown to any ambassador either of the Turk or Persian or other whatsoever.*

Roe also wrote : 'Neyther will this overgrown Eliphant (Mughal Emperor) descend to Article or bynde himself reciprocally to any Prince upon terms of Equality, but only by way of favour admit our stay.' All that Jahāngir could assure him was 'you shall be sure of as much privilege as any stranger.' The ambassador says of the Mughal officials : 'their Justice is generallie good to strangers ; they are not rigorous, except in searching for thinges to please, and what trouble we have is for hope of them, and by our own disorders.' He warned the Company : 'A war and trafique are incompatible. By my consent, you shall no way engage yourselves but at sea, where you are like to gayne as often as to lose. It is the beggaring of the Portugale, notwithstanding his many rich residences and territoryes, that he keeps souldiers that spend it ; yet his garrisons are meane. He never profited by the Indyees since he defended them. Observe this well. It hath been also the error of the Dutch, who seek Plantation here by the sword. They have a wonderfull stocke, they proule in all Places, they Posse some of the best ; yet there dead Payes Consume all the gayne. Lett this bee received as a rule that if you will Profit, seek it at Sea, and in quiett trade ; for without controversy it is an error to effect garrisons and Land wars in India.'

### *Jahāngir : A Study in Contrasts*

The character and achievements of Jahāngir are more difficult to judge than those of any of his predecessors or successors. He was indeed, as Vincent Smith has characterised him, 'a strange compound of tenderness and cruelty, justice and caprice, refinement and brutality, good sense and childishness.' But, if a balance were struck, between the credit and debit side of his life, there is little doubt, his assets were far greater than his liabilities. To enter upon a detailed discussion of this subject would take us far beyond our limits ; but the reader will not find it difficult to draw illustrative

material from what has been said already and what follows. Jahāngīr's love of ease, his self-indulgence in drink and love, his caprice and cruelty, and his superstition and childishness are notorious ; but his love of justice, religious toleration, energy where a situation demanded it, wisdom in the recognition of merit, whether in fine arts or in politics, are all worthy of due appreciation and praise. Whatever the faults of his youth, which clung to him through later life, the period of his rule as Emperor was a continuous and honest striving to maintain and extend the principles and dominions of his great father ; no ruler could do better, and Jahāngīr is to be understood in this light, if he is to be understood at all. The judgments of his contemporaries as well as modern critics will bear out what we have said.

*Lane-Poole* : " When he (Jahāngīr) ascended the throne in 1605, at the age of thirty-seven, his character, never wanting in a certain indolent good-nature, had mellowed. He had become less savage and more sober ; by day he was the picture of temperance, at night he became exceeding ' glorious ' \* . . . Jahāngīr carried his day-light sobriety so far as even to publish an edict against intemperance,† and emulated his far more contemptible ' brother ' James of Great Britain

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\* ' I .myself have been accustomed to take wine,' writes Jahāngīr, ' and from my eighteenth year to the present, which is the thirty-eighth year of my age, have regularly partaken of it. In early days, when I craved for drink, I sometimes took as many as twenty cups of double distilled liquor. In course of time it took great effect upon me, and I set about reducing the quantity. In the period of seven years I brought it down to five or six cups. My times of drinking varied. Sometimes I began when two or three hours of the day remained, sometimes I took it at night and a little in the day. So it was until my thirtieth year when I resolved to drink only at night, and at present I drink it only to promote digestion of my food.'—*Wakiat*, E. & D., VI, p. 285. Sir Thomas Roe relates how he was asked by Jahāngīr to drink : ' I drank a little, but it was more strong than ever I tasted, so that it made me sneeze, whereat he laughed, and called for raisins, almonds, and sliced lemons, which were brought me on a plate of gold and bade me eat and drink what I would, and no more.'—*Lane-Poole, Contemporary Sources*, p. 100.

† ' As the smoking of tobacco had taken very bad effect upon the health and mind of many persons, I ordered that no one should practise the habit. My brother Shāh Abbās (King of Persia), also being aware of its evil effects, had issued a command against the use of it in Iran.'—*Jahāngīr : Wakiat*, E. & D., VI, p. 351.

by writing a Persian counterblast against tobacco. In spite of his vices, which his fine constitution supported with little apparent injury almost to his sixtieth year, he was no fool ; he possessed a shrewd intelligence, and he showed his good sense in carrying on the government and principle of toleration inaugurated by Akbar. He was not deficient in energy when war was afoot ; he was essentially just when his passions were not thwarted ; and he cultivated religious toleration with the easy-going indifference which was the key-note of his character. The son of an eclectic philosopher and a Rajput princess, he professed himself a Muslim, restored the Muhammadan formulas of faith which Akbar had abandoned on the coinage, and revived the Hijra chronology, whilst preserving for regnal years and months the more convenient solar system. But he followed his father's policy towards the Hindus, and was equally tolerant towards Christians." (*Mediæval India*, pp. 298-99).

*Elphinstone* : "Jahāngīr's first measures were of a much more benevolent and judicious character than might have been expected of him. He confirmed most of his father's old officers in their stations ; and issued edicts, remitting some vexatious duties which had survived Akbar's reforms, forbidding the bales of merchants to be opened by persons in authority without their free consent, directing that no soldiers or servants of the State should quarter themselves on private houses, abolishing the punishments of cutting off ears and noses, and introducing other salutary regulations. Notwithstanding his own notorious habits, he strictly forbade the use of wine, and regulated that of opium ; subjecting all offenders against his rules to severe punishment."

Regarding Nūr Jahān's influence over Jahāngīr, he says, "Though her sway produced bad consequences in the end, *it was beneficial on the whole*. Her father was a wise and upright minister ; and it must have been, in part at least, owing to her influence that a great improvement took place in the conduct of Jahāngīr after the first few years of his reign. He was still capricious and tyrannical, but he was no longer guilty of such barbarous cruelties as before ; and although he still carried his excess in wine to the lowest stage of inebriety, yet it was at night, and in his private apartments. In occupations which kept him all day before the eyes of his subjects, he seems to have supported his character with sufficient dignity, and without any breaches of decorum. Nūr Jahān's capacity was not

less remarkable than her grace and beauty ; it was exerted in matters proper to her sex, as well as in state affairs. The magnificence of the emperor's court was increased by her taste, and the expense was diminished by her good arrangement. She contrived improvements in the furniture of apartments ; introduced female dresses more becoming than any in use before her time ; and it is a question in India whether it is to her or her mother that they owe the invention of *attar* of roses. One of the accomplishments by which she captivated Jahāngīr is said to have been her facility in composing extempore verses." (*History of India*, pp. 550-51, 555-566.)

*Vincent Smith* : "Terry truly observes : 'Now for the disposition of that King (Jahāngīr), it ever seemed unto me to be composed of extremes ; for sometimes he was barbarously cruel, and at other times he would seem to be exceeding fair and gentle.' He was capable of feeling the most poignant grief for the loss of a grand-child, and often showed pleasure in doing little acts of kindly charity. His writings are full of keen observations on natural objects. He went to Kashmir nearly every hot season, and recorded a capital description of the country, carefully drawing up a list of the Indian birds and beasts not to be found in the Happy Valley. He loved fine scenery, and would go into ecstasies over a waterfall. He thought the scarlet blossom of the *dhāk* or *palās* tree 'so beautiful that one cannot take one's eyes off it,' and was in raptures over the wild flowers of Kashmir."

Then after commenting on Jahāngīr's love of fine arts,\* *Smith*

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\* 'This day,' writes Jahāngīr, 'Abdul Hassan, a painter who bore the title of *Nadīru-z Zaman*, drew a picture of my Court, and presented it to me. He had attached it as a frontispiece to the *Jahāngīr-nāmā*. As it was well worthy of praise, I loaded him with great favours as an elegant painter and had no match in his time. If the celebrated artists Abul Hail and Bihazed were now alive, they would do him full justice for his exquisite taste in painting. His father, Aka Raza was always with me while I was a Prince, and his son was born in my household. However, the son is far superior to the father. I gave him a good education, and took care to cultivate his mind from his youth till he became one of the most distinguished men of his age. The portraits furnished by him were beautiful. Mansur is also a master of the art of drawing and he has the title of *Nadīru-l Asli*. In the time of my father and my own, there have been none to compare with these two artists. I am very fond of pictures, and have such discrimination in judging them. that I can tell the name of the artist (on seeing his work), whether living or dead. If there were

quotes the Emperor's *Memoirs* on his sense of justice\* and proceeds : "His religion is not easy to define. Grave Sir Thomas Roe roundly denounced him as an atheist, but he was not exactly that. He sincerely believed in God, although he did not frankly accept any particular revelation or subscribe to any definite creed . . . . He had not the slightest desire to persecute anybody on account of his religion. It is true that he passed severe orders against the Jains of Gujarat, whom his father had so greatly admired, but that was because for some reason or other he considered them to be seditious. . . . His personal religion seems to have been a vague deism, either taught by heretical Muhammadan Sufis, or the very similar doctrine of certain Hindu sages.† . . . The material for discourse on Jahāngir's interesting per-

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similar portraits finished by several artists, I could point out the painter of each.' *Wakiat*, E. & D. VI, pp. 359-60. The editor also cites the following observation from Catrou's *History of the Mogul Dynasty*, p. 178 — 'In this time there were found in the Indies native painters who copied the finest of our European pictures with a fidelity that might vie with the originals. He was partial to the sciences of Europe, and it was this which attached him to the Jesuits.'

Sir T. Roe also confirms. Roe had presented Jahāngir a picture which he said his own artists could exactly copy : 'At night he sent for me, being hasty to triumph in his workman, and showed me six pictures, five made by his man, all pasted on one table, so like that I was by candle-light troubled to discern which was which ; I confess, beyond all expectation ; yet showed my own and the difference, which were in art apparent, but not to be judged by the common eye. But for that at first sight I knew it not, he was very merry and joyful and cracked like a Northern man.—*Embassy*. Lane-Poole, *Contemporary Sources*, p. 98.

\* Referring to a capital sentence passed on an influential murderer Jahāngir observes : 'God forbid that in such affairs I should consider Princes, and far less that I should consider *Amirs*.' Terry speaks of the 'round and quick' justice which 'keeps the people in such order that there are not many executions !' Hawkins found that by the time he personally saw the Emperor and complained to him about his ill-treatment at Surat, Jahāngir had already got the official report and taken the first steps towards justice. If the local officials were guilty of justice, Hawkins observes, 'it is well if they escape with the loss of their lands.'

† *Jahāngir's religious policy*.—But for a few lapses, Jahāngir's religious policy was, in the main, a continuation of his father Akbar's, based on principles of wide toleration. The exceptions were mostly due to religion and politics being inseparable in life. The persecution of the Sikh Guru Arjun and of Mān Singh the Svetāmbar Jain leader at Ahmedābad (who, at the time of Khusru's rebellion, declared that Jahān-

sonality is so abundant that it would be easy to write at large on the subject." (*Oxford History*, pp. 387-89).

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gir's empire would come to an end in two years) are not indicative of the general policy. The Sikhs as a community were not persecuted by Jahāngir; the ordinances against the Jains were later withdrawn. Likewise were the Christians 'persecuted' on account of the follies of the Portuguese, but no sooner was peace restored, than they were once more restored to the royal favour. Terry observes: 'All religions are tolerated and their priests held in high esteem. Myself often received from the Mughal himself the appellation of Father with other many gracious words, with place among the best nobles.' Pietro Della Valle (1623-24) says, that the Hindus and Muslims 'live all mixed together and peaceably, because the grand Mughal... makes no difference in his dominions between the one sort and the other, and both in his court, and armies, and even among men of the highest degree, they are of equal account and consideration.'

Nevertheless, if Jahāngir felt that the preaching of any religious teacher had harmful consequences on the Empire, he did not hesitate to interfere. Two instances, both Muslim, are on record: the Afghan Sheikh Ibrāhīm Bābā was imprisoned at Chunar (1606) for his activities were 'disreputable and foolish' and he had gathered together a large following of Afghans near Lahore; in 1619, similarly, Sheikh Ahmad, a celebrated Muslim divine of Sirhind, who claimed to be the *Mahdi*, was imprisoned at Gwalior, and placed in the custody of a Rajput. Sheikh Ahmad had written a book called the *Maktubat* which was judged to contain 'many unprofitable things,' calculated to drag people 'into infidelity and impiety. Two years later the Sheikh recanted and was released; he was not only set free but also given a dress of honour and considerable sums of money more than once.' (Beni Prasad, p. 433).

Jahāngir's interest in deserving *sādhus* and *fakirs* was remarkable. In 1618-19 he wrote of Jadrup: 'On Saturday, for the second time, my desire for the company of Jadrup increased. After performing the midday devotions,... I ran and enjoyed his society in the retirement of his cell. I heard many sublime words of religious duties and knowledge of divine things. Without exaggeration, he sets forth clearly the doctrine of wholesome Sufism, and one can find delight in his society. He is sixty years of age. He was 22 when, forsaking all external attachments, he placed the foot of determination on the high-road of asceticism, and for 38 years he had lived in the garment of nakedness.... God Almighty has granted him an unusual grace, a lofty understanding, an exalted nature, and keen intellectual powers, etc..... On Wednesday I again went and bade him good-bye. Undoubtedly parting from him weighed upon my mind which desires the truth.' Sir Thomas Roe records another instance of a *Fakir's* visit to Jahāngir: 'This miserable wretch, clothed in rags, crowned with feathers, covered with ashes, His Majesty talked with for about an

*Ishwari Prasad* : "Jahāngīr is one of the most interesting figures in Mughal history. The ordinary view that he was a sensual plea-

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hour, with such familiarity and show of kindness that it must needs argue a humility not easily found among kings. The beggar sate where his (Jahāngīr's) son dare not do... and after many strange humiliations and charities, rising, the old wretch not being nimble, he took him up in his arms, which no cleanly body durst have touched, embracing him, and three times laying his hand on his heart, calling him father, he left him, and all us and me, in admiration of such virtue in a heathen prince. *Which I mention with envy and sorrow, that we having the true vine should bring forth crabs and a bastard stock of grapes*; that either our Christian princes had this devotion or that this zeal were guided by a true light of the Gospel.'

Here is a delightful portrait of Jahāngīr from the pen of Hawkins :—'Now here I mean to speak a little of his manners and customs in the Court. First in the morning, about the break of day, he is at his beads with his face turned to the westward. The manner of his praying, when he is in Agra, is in a private fair room, upon a goodly set stone, having only a Persian lamb-skin under him. At the upper end of this stone the pictures of our Lady and Christ are placed, graven in stone; so he turneth over his beads and saith 320 words according to the number of beads, and then his prayer is ended. After he hath done, he showeth himself to the people, receiving their salams or good-morrows, unto whom multitudes resort every morning for this purpose. This done, he sleepeth two hours more, and than dineth, and passeth his time with his women; and at noon he showeth himself to the people again, sitting till three of the clock, viewing and seeing his pastimes and sports made by men and fighting of many sorts of beasts. every day sundry kinds of pastimes.

'Then at three of the clock all the nobles in general, that be in Agra and are well, resort unto the Court, the King coming forth in open audience, sitting in his seat royal, and every man standing in his degree before him, his chiefest sort of nobles standing within the red rail. and the rest without..... The King heareth all causes in this place and stayeth some two hours every day.

'Then he departeth towards his private place of prayer; his prayer being ended, four or five sorts of very well dressed and roasted meats are brought him, of which as he pleaseth he eateth a bit to stay his stomach, drinking once of his strong drink. Then he cometh forth into a private room, where none can come but such as himself nominateth (for two years I was one of his attendants there). In this place he drinketh other three cup-fulls, which is the portion that the physicians allot him. This done he eateth opium, and then he ariseth, and being in the height of his drink, he layeth him down to sleep, everyman departing to his own home. And after he hath slept two hours they awake him and



sure-seeker and a callous tyrant does him less than justice. All accounts agree that he was intelligent, shrewd, and capable of understanding the most complex problems of the state without any difficulty. . . . There is much in his character that deserves to be condemned, but there is a great deal that entitles him to be placed among the most fascinating personalities of Indian History." (*A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, pp. 524-30.)

*Beni Prasad* : "Jauntily to dismiss him (Jahāngīr) as a hard-hearted, fickle-minded tyrant, soaked in wine and sunk in debauch, as more than one modern writer has done, is at once unscientific and unjust. His fame has been eclipsed by the transcendent glory of his father and the dazzling splendour of his son. His memory has suffered from the implicit faith reposed in historical forgeries and travellers' tales. His career has been viewed and judged in isolated passages. From a review of his life as a whole, he comes out a sensible, kind-hearted man, with strong family affections and unstinted generosity to all, with a burning hatred of oppression and passion for justice. On a few occasions in his career as prince and emperor, he was betrayed, not without provocation, by fits of wrath into individual acts of barbarous cruelty. But as a rule, he was remarkable for humanity, affability and open hand. . . .

"Jahāngīr's reign, on the whole, was fruitful of peace and prosperity to the Empire. Under its auspices, industry and commerce progressed, architecture achieved notable triumphs ; painting reached its high-water mark ; literature flourished as it had never done before : Tulsidās composed the *Rāmāyan*, which forms at once the Homer and the Bible, the Shakespeare and the Milton of the teeming millions of Northern India. A host of remarkable Persian and vernacular poets all over the country combined to make the period the Augustan age of mediæval Indian literature. *The political side of Jahāngīr's history is interesting enough, but its virtue lies in cultural development.*" (*History of Jahāngīr*, pp. 430-38.)

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bring his supper to him ; at which time he is not able to feed himself ; but it is thrust into his mouth by others ; and this is about one of the clock ; and then he sleepeth the rest of the night.'—*Relations*, Lane-Poole, *Contemporary Sources*, pp. 88-9.

## SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

- 1606 Prince Khusrū's rebellion ; execution of Guru Arjun. Hargovind's succession. Death of Sher-Afgan (Nūr Jahān's first husband).
- 1608 Rāṇa Amar Singh defeats a Mughal army at Dewir. Hawkins reaches Surat. Birth of saint Tukārām.
- 1609 Malik Ambar master in the Deccan. Hawkins arrives at Agra (stays till 1611).
- 1611 Jahāngir's marriage with Nūr Jahān. Usmān's rebellion in Bengal.
- 1612 Jahāngir permits the English to build factories at Surat, Ahmedābad and Cambay. Danish East India Co. formed.
- 1614 Rāṇa Amar Singh submits to Prince Khurram. Death of Rāja Mān Singh of Amber. Ferishta writes his famous history.
- 1615 Jahāngir's perpetual *firmān* to Edwardes for trading in the Mughal dominions. Sir Thomas Roe's Embassy reaches India.
- 1616 Conquest of Ahmednagar by Prince Khurram.
- 1619 Sir Thomas Roe leaves India.
- 1620 Capture of Kāngra by Khurram.
- 1622 Loss of Kandahār. Rebellion of Khurram.
- 1623 Death of Tulsi Dās.
- 1626 Mahābat Khān takes Jahāngir and Nūr Jahān captive. Death of Malik Ambar.
- 1627 Death of Jahāngir. Birth of Shivāji.

## CHAPTER XV

### GOLDEN AGE OF THE EMPIRE

The thirty years of Shāh Jahān's rule found the Empire at its zenith, in point of prosperity though not in extent. On the whole, they were years of peace and plenty, with few internal disturbances of any formidable character ; the only wars, whether successful or otherwise, were those of aggression, and intended to extend the boundaries of the Empire. Until the Empire was convulsed by the War of Succession, following on the illness of Shāh Jahān, it had held forth the promise of a most glorious epoch in the history of India. But events soon showed that there were worms in-folded in the gilded tomb, and all that glittered was not gold. The failure of the Imperial arms on the north-west frontier, the destruction of temples by Shāh Jahān, and the internecine feuds that were brewing—all indicated an unhappy augury for the future of the Empire. The reign of Shāh Jahān which had commenced with crime was not destined to end without it. Though Shāh Jahān was of a more staid character than his father, his rule is not without contrasts : it was an epoch of grandeur not altogether unmixed with symptoms of decay. It was both glorious and portentous at one and the same time.

#### *Early Life and Accession :*

The early career of Shāh Jahān has been too clearly delineated in the last chapter to need repetition ; yet a few important details may be enumerated here. He was born on 5 January, 1592, at Lahore. His mother was the Rajput Princess (daughter of Rāja Udai Singh of Mārwar) variously called Jagat Gosāin, Jodhbai, and Mānmati, whom Salim had married in 1586. He had been named Khurram or 'the joyous' and brought up under the care of Akbar's childless wife Ruquiah Begam. Although he had no dearth of literary teachers, the young Prince, from the very beginning, showed a decided turn for more practical pursuits. In spite of his sharp wits and strong memory, he was more at home with the bow and arrow, swordsmanship and riding, than with Persian and Turki. About his sixth

year he suffered from small-pox, the recovery from which delighted Akbar so much that the occasion was celebrated with alms-giving and the setting free of some prisoners. In 1606 Prince Khurram was first entrusted with responsibilities of a public character, when he was left in nominal charge of the capital (with of course a Council of Regency) during Jahāngīr's absences in pursuit of the rebellious Prince Khusru. In 1607 he received the rank of 8,000 *zāt* and 5,000 *sawār*, with a flag and drums; the same year he was betrothed to Arjumand Bānu Begam, the daughter of Asaf Khān, more famous as Mumtāz-i Mahāl, the Lady of the Tāj. This was followed by his nomination to the *Sarkār* of Hisar Firoza which was the virtual declaration of his succession to the throne. Two years later, he was again betrothed; this time to a daughter of Mirza Muzāffar Husain Safavi (of the house of Shāh Ismail of Persia). This marriage strangely enough took place in 1610, whereas that with the former fiancé was celebrated only two years later, in 1612. In addition to these, Khurram married a third wife, daughter of Shāh Nawāz Khān (grandson of Bairām Khān), in 1617.

His children of any note were all by his second and most celebrated wife, Mumtāz Begam; they were fourteen in all, out of whom only seven survived; (1) Jahānara Begam was born at Ajmer, in 1614; (2) Dārā Shukoh, in the same city in 1615; (3) Shāh Shuja, also at Ajmer, in 1616; (4) Roshānara Begum, at Burhānpur, in 1617; (5) Aurangzeb, at Dauhad on 24 October 1618; (6) Murād Bakhsh, at Rohtas in 1624; and Gauhārara Begam, at Burhānpur, in 1631.

"The history of Jahāngīr's reign," writes Dr. Saksena, "is mainly a record of the brilliant victories won by Prince Khurram. . . . His charming manners, his stern rules of conduct, his devotion to duty, and his dashing courage, all combined to ensure for him a successful career. Contrast gave him a superiority over his brothers and rivals whose failure more than once added to his glory. He had never to wait for an opportunity; it came to him automatically."

Khurram's first great triumph was against Mewar in 1614. It was an illustration of his pluck and tactics. He eminently succeeded where other veterans had failed. It is strange that Vincent Smith should describe him as 'wanting in skill as a military leader.' Dr. Saksena is truer in his observation that the subjugation of Mewār enhanced the glory of the Mughal Empire, and that, by this victory,

Khurram's 'reputation as a general of consummate skill and ability was established beyond doubt ; and he was marked out as the rising star.'

The second great chance of his life came to Khurram when he was appointed to the southern command (1616-17), in supersession to his elder brother Parvez and other reputed generals. Already raised to the dignity of 20,000 *zāt* and 10,000 *sawār*, Khurram was now given the title of *Shāh*, never before bestowed on any Mughal Prince and placed in full charge of the Deccan. 'Mewār revealed him as a skilful general, and the Deccan as a clever statesman.' He was further exalted to the unprecedented rank of 30,000 *zāt* and 20,000 *sawār* and given the title of *Shāh Jahān*. Then followed gifts and offerings 'such as had never come in any reign or time' (amounting in all to Rs. 2,260,000). Finally, *Shāh Jahān* was given charge of the province of Gujarat (1618), in recognition of his meritorious services.

To crown all, the operations carried on unsuccessfully against Kāngra, since 1615, gave *Shāh Jahān* his third opportunity. He won his laurels again at this place towards the close of 1618.

The first triumph of *Shāh Jahān* in the Deccan was really a piece of good luck for him, but it secured no permanent peace for the Empire. The corruption and quarrels of the Mughal officers, on the one hand, and the courage and cleverness of Malik Ambar, on the other, had resulted in reversing the tables against the Empire, since the withdrawal of *Shāh Jahān* in 1617. He was, therefore, again called to the South in 1621, and once more his tact and courage triumphed. But, as we have observed in the previous chapter, his success was his undoing. Suspicion of *Nūr Jahān*'s jealousy drove him to indiscretion. When he was called to lead the campaign against Kandahār, he thought it more prudent to rebel. The circumstances and course of his insurrection have already been described. 'His rebellion,' as Dr. Saksena has well expressed, 'was a clash of two powerful ambitions each trying to subdue the other.' It was also a great blunder, because by his rashness he played into the hands of his enemies. His grave misconduct, though he tried to 'clothe his immodest acts in the garment of apology,' cost him the unique position to which he had climbed up in the Empire. But though baffled, his usual good luck once more came to his rescue. The death of *Jahāngīr* at Rājauri on 29 October, 1627, was a boon to *Shāh Jahān*.

Although he was far away in the Deccan at that time, he briskly made his way to the throne.

There was a quick shuffling of the cards at the Imperial headquarters. In the words of the *Bādshāh-nāmā* (of Abdul Hamid Lahori) :

‘Nūr Mahāl, who had been the cause of much strife and contention, now clung to the vain idea of retaining the reins of government in her grasp, as she had held them during the reign of the late Emperor. She wrote to *Nāshudāni* (Shāhriyar), advising him to collect as many men as he could and hasten to her.’ On the other hand, Nūr Jahān’s brother Asaf Khān was equally alert. He ‘determined that, as Shāh Jahān (his son-in-law) was far away from Agra, it was necessary to take some steps to prevent disturbances in the city, and to take possession of the princes (sons of Shāh Jahān) Muhammad Dārā Shukoh, M. Shāh Shuja, and M. Aurangzeb, who were in the female apartments with Nūr Mahāl. They, therefore, resolved that for some few days they would raise to the throne Bulākdī (Dāwar Bakhsh) the son of Khusru, who, by Nūr Mahāl’s contrivance, had been placed with *Nashudāni*.’

Mutāmad Khān narrates the sequel in some detail : ‘Nūr Jahān Begam sent several persons to bring her brother (Asaf Khān) to her ; but he made excuses, and did not go. Asaf Khān now sent Banārasi, a swift runner, to Shāh Jahān, with intelligence of the death of Jahāngir ; and as there was no time for writing, he sent his signet ring as a guarantee. Next day the royal retinue came down from the mountains to Bhimbar. There the funeral ceremonies were performed, and the corpse was sent on under escort to Lahore, where it was interred in a garden which Nūr Jahān had made.

‘When the nobles and officers of the State became aware that Asaf Khān had resorted to the stratagem of proclaiming Dāwar Bakhsh, in order to secure the accession of Shāh Jahān, and that Dāwar was, in fact, a mere sacrificial lamb, they gave their support to Asaf Khān, and did whatever he said. So the *Khutbah* was read in Dārwar Bakhsh’s name near Bhimbar.’

Shāhriyar, in the meantime, had assumed the royal title at Lahore. ‘He seized upon the royal treasure and everything belonging to the State which was in Lahore. To secure troops and supporters, he gave to every one what he asked for, and in the course of one week he distributed 70 *lacs* of rupees among the old and new nobles, in the hope of securing his position.’ A clash was, therefore, inevitable. The rival forces met three *kos* away from Lahore, and ‘at the first attack, Shāhriyar’s mercenaries, unable to face the old and loyal servants of the State, broke, and fled.... ..unable to understand his position and danger, Shāhriyar fell back and entered the fortress, thus placing his own foot in the trap. Next day the nobles arrived,.....Shāhriyar fled for refuge into the female apartments of the late Emperor. A eunuch brought him out, and he was led

bound to the presence of Dāwar Bakhsh. After making the regular bows and homage, he was placed in confinement, and two or three days afterwards he was blinded.....Tahimuras and Hoshang, sons of Prince Dāniyal, were also taken and confined. Asaf Khān wrote to Shāh Jahān, informing him of the victory.....

'Shāh Jahān sent a *firmān* to Yaminu-d-daula Asaf Khān, to the effect that it would be well if Dāwar Bakhsh the son, and *Nashudāni* the useless brother of Khusru, and the sons of Prince Dāniyal, were all sent out of the world.....' On the 2nd Jumad-l awwal, 1037 A. H.....by general consent Shāh Jahān was proclaimed at Lahore, and the *Khutbah* was read in his name. Dāwar Bakhsh, whom the supporters of Shāh Jahān had deemed it advisable to set up in order to prevent disturbances, was now cast into prison. On the 26th Jumada-l awwal, Dāwar, his brother Garhas, Shāhriyar, and Tahimuras and Hoshang, sons of the deceased Prince Dāniyal, were all put to death.'

'Shāh Jahān ascended the throne at Agra on the 18th Jumada-s-sani, 1037 A.H. (4 February, 1628), with the title of Abu-l Muzāfar Shahābu-d dīn Muhammad Sāhib Kirān-i Sāni.'

The coronation was attended with a lavishness quite characteristic of the monarch who is still remembered as Shāh Jahān 'the magnificent.' The Imperial courtiers carried the news of the accession to the most distant corners of the Empire. Poets, astrologers, learned and pious men, all received their due rewards. The Empress Mumtāz Mahāl herself got a present of 200,000 *ashrafs*, and Rs. 600,000, together with an annuity of 100,000 *ashrafs*, Jahānara Begam received 100,000 *ashrafs*, and Rs. 400,000, with an annual allowance of Rs. 600,000. Rs. 800,000, were distributed among the Princes and Princesses of the Imperial family. The loyal officers and nobles were equally well rewarded, the disloyal were degraded. Among the most notable, Mahābat Khān was promoted to the rank of 7,000 *zāt* and 7,000 *sawār*, and made Khān-khānan. Above all was Asaf Khān exalted to the dignity of 8 000 *zāt* and *sawār*, called 'uncle,' allowed to kiss the Emperor's feet (a unique privilege), entrusted with the Emperor's signet ring, and made the *Vakil* of the Empire.

### *Rebellions and Minor Conquests :*

There were two great rebellions at the commencement of Shāh Jahān's reign, one Hindu and the other Muslim. The first was that of Jajhar Singh, son of the notorious Bīr Singh Dev Bundela ; the second was of Khān Jahān Lodi, Jahāngīr's officer whom we have met with already. The former started in the first year of Shāh Jahān's reign (1628), and with a break, continued to defy the Emperor until 1635, when he met with the fate usual for rebels. The latter broke out in the second year of the reign (1629), and after a short interval of restless peace, found the leader defeated and decapitated

(1631). The Portuguese also created some trouble in the eastern provinces and were ruthlessly suppressed. These, as well as other disturbances and conquests will be noticed in due course. The military operations need not be followed in detail. Prince Aurangzeb was in nominal command of 20,000 troops directed to reduce the rebels. Rāja Devi Singh, one of the rivals of Jajhar, was with the Imperial army.

‘Notwithstanding the density and strength of his forests, Jajhar was alarmed at the advance of the Imperial forces, and removed his family, his cattle and money, from Undcha to the fort of Dhamuni, which his father had built. . . . Durgābhān, son of Jajhar, and Durjan Sāl, son of Bikramjit, were made prisoners by the emperor’s order and they were made Musalmans by the names of Islam Kuli and Ali Kuli, and they were both placed in the charge of Firoz Khān Nāzir. Rāṇi Parbati, being severely wounded, was passed over; the other women were sent to attend upon ladies of the Imperial palace. ‘Udaibhān, the son of Jajhar, and his younger brother, Siyam Dawa, who had fled to Golkonda, were made prisoners by Kutbu-l Mulk and were sent in custody to the Emperor. They arrived on the 7th Shawwal. The young boy was ordered to be made a Musalman, and to be placed in the charge of Firoz Khān Nāzir, along with the son of Bikramjit. Udaibhān and Siyam Dawa, who were of full age, were offered the alternative of Islam or death. They chose the latter, and were sent to hell. The royal army then encamped on the edge of the tank. . . . While they rested there, information was brought that Jajhar and Bikramjit. . . . after escaping from the bloody conflict, had fled to hide themselves in the wilds, where they were killed with great cruelty by the gonds who inhabit that country. . . . Khān-khānan rode forth to seek their bodies, and having found them, cut off their heads and sent them to Court. . . . When they arrived, the Emperor ordered them to be hung up over the gate of Sehur.’

But the irrepressible Bundelas were not subdued. Another leader arose in Champat Rāi of Mahoba. In 1639 his depredations and incursions into Mughal territory made the road to the Deccan very insecure. Abdulla Khān was directed by Shāh Jahān to round up the rebels. But Champat Rāi played the Robinhood. He had the fullest support of his people. In 1642, through the agency of Pahād Singh, a son of Bīr Singh Dev, he was temporarily brought under the Imperial yoke. But his more famous son, Rāja Chhatrasāl, again challenged the Imperial authority under Aurangzeb.

Another exactly similar rebellion took place in Mau Narpur in 1639. Its *zamindar*, Jagat Singh, was a loyal servant of the Empire, but his son Rāj rūp proved recalcitrant. Jagat Singh’s secret sympathy



with his rebellious son involved him in a war with the Imperial authorities. However, unlike the Bundela revolt, this insurrection ended in reconciliation. After nearly three years' hostilities, Jagat Singh submitted in March 1642, and ended his life as a loyal servant of the Crown.

*Khān Jahān's Rebellion* : Khān Jahān Lodi was a son of Daulat Khān Lodi, one of Akbar's officers. He held the rank of 5,000, and was successively governor of Gujarat and the Deccan in the reign of Jahāngīr. But like many another Afghan under Mughal dominance he still cherished dreams of independence. Unfortunately he was also guilty of peculation. Never heartily loyal to the Mughal Emperor, he had surrendered Bālāghāt to the Nizām-shāh for a paltry 30,000 rupees. After the sudden death of Jahāngīr, and the temporary uncertainty of succession, he vaguely imagined a great opportunity to assert himself in the South. Shāh Jahān, when he ascended the throne, sent for him, and for a time seemed to have won him over. But the sullen nobleman proved incorrigible. He was jealous of Mahābat Khān, whose promotion as *Khān-khānān* he looked upon as a supersession of his own claims. He was also disappointed at what he considered to be cold reception at Court. He soon began to suspect even his personal safety and feared he might well be called upon to answer for his peculation. Under these circumstances he determined to seek refuge in flight. He effected this on the night of 5 October, 1629.

'As soon as the Emperor was informed of it, he sent Khwāja Abu-l Hasan . . . . in pursuit of the fugitive. Unmindful of the smallness of their own force and the numbers of the Afghans, they followed them and overtook them in the vicinity of Dholpur.' Yet, after a brave fight the rebel escaped. When the traitor entered the territory of Jajhar Singh Bundela, that chieftain was absent in the Dakhin; but his eldest son Bikramjit was at home, and sent the rebel out of the territory by unfrequented roads. If Bikramjit had not thus favoured his escape, he would have been either taken prisoner or killed. He proceeded to Gondwana, and after staying there some time in disappointment and obscurity, he proceeded by way of Berar to the country of Burhān Nizāmu-l Mulk.'

The rest of the flight, and pursuit, need not be followed, with the exception of one incident, viz., the part played by Shāhuji Bhonsle, Shivāji's father.

'At this time, Shāhuji Bhonsla, son-in-law of Jadu Rai, the Hindū commander of Nizām Shāh's army, came in and joined Azam Khān (the

Mughal commander). After the murder of Jadu Rai, . . . Shāhuji broke off his connexion with Nizām Shāh, and, retiring to the districts of Puna and Chākan he wrote to Āzam Khān, proposing to make his submission upon receiving a promise of protection. Āzam Khān wrote to Court, and received orders to accept the proposal. Shāhuji then came and joined him with two thousand horse. He received a *khilāt*, a *mansab* of 5,000, and a gift of two *lacs* of rupees, and other presents. His brother Mināji received a robe and a *mansab* of 3,000 personal and 1500 horse. Samāji, son of Shāhuji, also received a robe and a *mansab* of 2000 personal and 1000 horse. Several of their relations and dependants also obtained gifts and marks of distinction.'

Finally, 'Khān Jahān was much afflicted at the loss of his sons and his followers (who were either killed or taken prisoners by the Imperial forces). All hope of escape was cut off; so he told his followers that he was weary of life, that he had reached the end of his career, and there was no longer any means of deliverance for him; he desired, therefore, that every man should make off as best he could. A few determined to stand by him to the last, but many fled. . . . In the midst of the struggle Madhu Singh pierced him with a spear, and before Muzāffar Khān could come up, the brave fellows cut Khān Jahān and his dear son Aziz to pieces. About a hundred of his adherents fell, and their heads were cut off. . . . The heads of Khān Jahān and Aziz. . . were sent to the Imperial Court. . . . (His other sons were imprisoned). The heads of the rebels were placed over the gate of the fort. After their victory, Abdu-lla Khān and Saiyid Muzāffar Khān came to Court, and received many marks of favour. The former was advanced to a *mansab* of 6,000 and 6,000 horse, and he received the title *Firoz Jang*. Saiyid Muzāffer Khān was promoted to a *mansab* of 5,000 and 5,000 horse. He received the title *Khān Jahān*.'

*Suppression of Portuguese Piracy*: The Portuguese were long settled in the eastern parts of Bengal, but they were never interfered with by the Mughal Emperor so long as their activities were harmless. On the contrary, they obtained a monopoly of salt from Government, and paid 10,000 *tankas* into the Imperial treasury every year.\* But their omnivorous adventures soon landed them in trouble. They were not content with mere trade; their missionary zeal to convert the natives evoked much hostility. Matters were made worse by their piratical pursuits also. Often they penetrated forty or fifty leagues up-country, from the river mouths, 'carried away the entire population of villages on market days, and at times when the inhabitants were assembled for celebration of marriage or some other

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\* Manucci records about Hugli, 'Here I found the chief inhabitants of Hugli, all of them rich Portuguese, for in those days they alone were allowed to deal in salt throughout the province of Bengal.' (*A Pepys of Mogul India*, p. 118).

festival.' They would even 'offer for sale the aged people in their very places of residence, and it was a pathetic sight,' says Bernier, 'to see young men redeeming their parents.'

Under such provocation Shāh Jahān instituted a ruthless campaign against these foreigners (1632). Various motives are ascribed for this attack on the Portuguese, but that it was neither sustained nor universal, makes it clear beyond doubt that it was purely due to local irritation. Sir Edward Maclagan is perfectly right when he observes :

"The trouble at Hugli was not due primarily to religious quarrel. The local Governors had put no obstacles in the way of propaganda and had paid due respect to the Catholic priesthood. . . . the Viceroy had protected them from the attacks of Mullas and Pirs. The hostilities undertaken by the Moguls against the Portuguese in Hugli originated in political causes, namely, the sympathy and encouragement which the Portuguese of Hugli had given to compatriots, the Farangis of Chittagong, who were little more than pirates, ready to lend their services to the king of Arakan against the Moguls. A religious element was indeed imported into the quarrel by Shāh Jahān, probably for reasons of policy. . . . The Farangis made slaves of large number of Mogul subjects, and of these slaves they made Christians. 'Boasting,' says Bernier, 'they made more Christians in a twelve month than all the missionaries in the Indies do in ten years.' The religious aspect, however, of the relations between the Moguls and the Portuguese was of subsidiary importance, and there was much, apart from religion, to justify the punishment of Hugli."

The details of the fight are of little consequence. The Portuguese defended themselves bravely, desperately, but it was of little avail against the concentrated might of the Empire. We learn from the *Bādshāh-nāmā* of Lahori :—

'The royal army was engaged for three months and a half in the siege of this strong place (Hugli). Sometimes the infidels fought, sometimes they made overtures of peace, protracting the time in hopes of succour from their countrymen. With base treachery they pretended to make proposals of peace, and sent nearly a *lac* of rupees as tribute, while at the same time they ordered 7,000 musketeers who were in their service to open fire. Finally, however, they were all defeated. 'Whoever escaped from the water and fire became a prisoner. From the beginning of the siege to the conclusion, men and women, old and young, altogether nearly 10,000 of the enemy were killed, being either blown up with powder, drowned in water, or burnt by fire. Nearly 1,000 brave warriors of the Imperial army obtained the glory of martyrdom. 4,400 Christians of both sexes were taken prisoners, and nearly 10,000 inhabitants of the neighbouring country who had been kept in confinement by these tyrants were set at liberty.'

The figures may not be very accurate. 'On the 11th Muharram [1043 A.H.], the writer concludes, 'Kāsim Khān and Bahādur Kambu brought... 400 Christian prisoners, male and female, young and old, with the idols of their worship, to the presence of the faith-defending Emperor. He ordered that the principles of the Muhammadan religion should be explained to them, and that they should be called upon to adopt it... Those who refused were to be kept in continual confinement. So it came to pass that many of them passed from prison to hell. Such of their idols as were likenesses of the prophets were thrown into the Jumna, the rest were broken to pieces.'

*Minor Conquests* : Before proceeding to the major political events of the reign, a passing reference might be made to some of the minor conquests of Shāh Jahān. Most of these relate to the subjugation of recalcitrant chiefs of petty *rājas* and *zamindārs*, like Bhagirath Bhil (1632) and Marvi Gond (1644) in Mālwa, and Rāja Pratāp of Palamau (1642) in Chutia-Nagpur, and the turbulent border tribes on the frontiers. But the most notable were perhaps the cases of Little Tibet and Assam. In 1634 the ruler of the former country had been persuaded to acknowledge the supremacy of the Mogul Emperor and to read the *khutbah* in Shāh Jahān's name. Failure to maintain this attitude of loyalty resulted in a big expedition, consisting of 2,000 horse and 10,000 infantry, being led into Little Tibet under Zafar Khān, in 1637-38. The prestige of the Empire was again restored, the *khutbah* was again read in Shāh Jahān's name, and an indemnity of one million rupees was also paid into the Imperial treasury by the Tibetan ruler Abdāl.

The conquest of Bengal had brought the Mughals into close contact with the Mongoloid states in the north-east of India. Akbar, on the whole, had cultivated friendly relations with the rulers of Kuch-Bihar and Kāmrūp, but during Jahāngīr's reign Mughal policy in this direction "imperceptibly took an aggressive turn." This was largely due to the internal weakness of the states themselves, no less than to the ambition of the Mughal officer, Islām Khān. Within a short time both Kuch-Bihar and Kāmrūp were annexed to the Empire. The next step of Mughal Imperialism was naturally in Assam. This was reserved for successful execution in the reign of Shāh Jahān. From 1628-39 there was open war between the Empire and Assam. It resulted in the definite fixing of boundaries and resumption of peaceful trade relations, not unmingled with diplomacy, during the rest of the reign (1639-57). The outbreak of the fratricidal war unsettled everything.

*Badakhshān and Kandahār :*

The unrealised ambition of Bābur to conquer and rule over his ancestral dominions in Samarkand and Bokhārā, seemed to be still active, through some principle of heredity, in the reign of Shāh Jahān. The stars of the Empire were clearly in the ascendant, and Shāh Jahān, who had even as a Prince made his mark as a conqueror, now cast wistful eyes beyond the Hindukush towards Transoxiana, Balkh, and Badakhshān. He turned the puissant arms of the Empire for the reconquest of these distant regions as well as of Kandahār which had been lost since 1622. The result in both cases, unfortunately, was disastrous.

A quarrel between Nazr Muhammad Khān, ruler of Bokhārā and his son Abdu-l Aziz, gave Shāh Jahān a tempting opportunity to interfere. In June 1646, he sent an army of 50,000 horse and 100,000 foot, under the command of Prince Murād and Ali Mardān Khān, into Balkh. They entered the city in July, and were rewarded by the capture of a treasure worth 12 *lacs* of rupees, 2,500 horses and 300 camels. Nazr Muhammad ran away to Persia, whence he returned triumphant not very long after.

Prince Murād had no desire to remain long in these turbulent regions, and evinced on the contrary a keen desire to get back to India.

Under these circumstances, to settle the confusion in Balkh, the Emperor found it necessary to send there a trustworthy and able manager : so he selected Sadu-lla Khān, his prime minister. . . . Sadu-lla Khān returned on the 5th Shaban, 1056-7, having settled the affairs of Balkh, and *restored order and tranquillity among the soldiers and people, and rescued the country from wretchedness*. He had most effectually carried out the orders of the Emperor, and was rewarded with a *khilāt* and a thousand increase to his *mansab*. On the 24th Zi-l hijja, 1056, the Emperor bestowed the countries of Balkh and Badakhshān on Aurangzeb, and increased his *mansab* to 15,000 personal and 10,000 horse . . . .

But, even Aurangzeb, in spite of his great personal courage, which impressed the Badakhshānis very much,\* could not hold the

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\* The grim tenacity of Prince Aurangzeb struck terror into the heart of the enemy ; . . . 'one day, the hour of evening prayer arrived when the battle was at its hottest ; Aurangzeb spread his carpet on the field, knelt down and calmly said his prayers, regardless of the strife and din around him. He was then, as during the rest of the campaign, without armour and shield. The Bokhārā army gazed on the scene with wonder, and Abdu-l Aziz, in generous admiration, stopped the fight, crying : " To fight with such a man is to court one's own destruction." ' Saksena, op. cit., p. 207.

provinces for long. On account of the sheer impossibility of maintaining the Mughal position there, retreat became inevitable.

"The country was desolated, winter close at hand, grain scarce, and time short," Aurangzeb told his men, "so that there would be great difficulty in making arrangements for the winter, and remaining in the kingdom during that inclement season..." The Prince then marched with all his forces from the neighbourhood of... Balkh; where, having ceded the country to Nazr Muhammad Khān, he delivered up the town and citadel of Balkh to Mahammed Kāsīm and Kafsh Kālmak.

From the beginning of the invasion of Balkh and Badakhshān (1645) till the end (October 1647), when those conquered territories were ceded to Nazr Muhammad Khān there was expended out of the State Exchequer, in the progress of this undertaking, the sum of two *krors* of rupees, which is equivalent to seven *lacs* of the *tumans* current in Irak.'

The march back from Balkh to Kabul (October 1647) was nearly as disastrous as the British withdrawal from Kabul in 1842. According to Ināyat Khān, 'from the first commencement of the army's crossing to the end, about 5,000 men, a similar number of animals such as horses, elephants, camels, oxen, etc., were destroyed and a vast deal of property remained buried in the snow.'

Kandahār, on account of its strategical and commercial importance, had ever been the bone of contention between the Shāh of Persia and the Emperor of Hindustan. Conquered by Bābur in 1522, it had been lost for a time and recovered by Humāyun in 1545. Lost again during Akbar's minority, it was re-acquired in 1595. Jahāngīr once more lost it in 1622, but Shāh Jahān regained it in 1638. Ten years later, in 1648, the Persians recaptured Kandahār for the last time, and despite persistent efforts (1648-49 and 1652-53) the Mughals could never wrest it from their hands again. Diplomatic embassies and very costly gifts were exchanged during the intervals, between the Shāh and the Emperor, but they were all directed to the study of each other's political advantages and weaknesses with the ultimate object of outwitting the rival. Finally, Persia won this race for Kandahār against the Emperor of Hindustan.

In 1638, Ali Mardān Khān, the Persian Governor of Kandahār, fearing that he might be called upon by Shāh to account for the large sums he had embezzled from the revenues of his province, invited the Mughals to capture it. 'On the approach of the Imperial forces,' says Lahori, 'Ali Mardān Khān conducted them into the fortress, and gave it up to them .... The Governor of Kabul was

directed to proceed to Kandahār, and present a *lac* of rupees to Ali Mardān Khān. He was then to take the Khān to Kabul, and to send him under escort to the Imperial Court, with all his family and dependants . . . . All the country of Kandahār with its fortresses was annexed to the Imperial dominions.' But this was only a short-lived triumph.

When the ambitious Shāh Abbās II came to the throne, in 1642, Persia seemed determined to reconquer Kandahār. Owing to the minority of the Shāh, however, the actual attack was not made until 1648.

Then, 'it reached the ear of royalty (Shāh Jahān), through the representations of Daulat Khān, ruler of Kandahār, and Purdil Khān, Governor of Bust, that Shāh Abbās II, having come to the sacred city of Tus with intent to rescue the kingdom of Kandahār, had proceeded towards the confines of Khurāsān, with all his matchlockmen and pioneers. It was, besides, reported that he had despatched men to Farah, Sistan, and other places, to collect supplies of grain, and having sent on a party in advance to Herat, was doing his utmost to block up the road on this side; being well aware that, during the winter, owing to the quantity of snow on the ground, the arrival of reinforcements from Hindustan by way of Kabul and Multan was impracticable, he proposed advancing in this direction during that inclement season, and had despatched Shāh Kuli Beg, son of Maksud Beg, his *wazir*, as expeditiously as possible, with a letter to Court, and further that individual in question had reached Kandahār, and, without halting more than three days, had resumed his journey to the august presence.

'His Majesty, after hearing this intelligence, having summoned Allamī Sadulla Khān from the metropolis, commanded him to write *firmāns* to all the nobles and *mansabdārs* who were at their respective estates, *jāgirs* and homes, directing them to set out with all speed for Court. It was likewise ordered that the astrologers should determine the proper moment for the departure of the world-traversing camp from the metropolis to the capitals Lahore and Kabul.

'As soon as it reached the royal ear, . . . that . . . the Shāh had arrived outside the fortress of Kandahār, and besieged it, the ever successful Prince Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahādur was appointed to proceed thither with Allamī Sadulla Khān, and some of the chief officers of State, such as Bahādur Khān, Mirza Rāja Jai Singh, Rustam Khān, Rāja Bithaldās, and Kalich Khān. Besides these, there were upwards of fifty individuals from amongst the nobles, and a vast number of *mansabdārs*, *ahadis* and archers, and matchlockmen—the whole number of whom, under the regulation requiring them to bring one-fifth respective rallies of fighting men into the field, would amount to 50,000 horsemen, and according to the rule enforcing a fourth, to 60,000—as well as 10,000 infantry, matchlock and rocket men, etc. It was ordered that subsidiary grants of the money

out of the State Exchequer should be made to the nobles and *mansabdārs* holding *jāgirs*, who were appointed to serve in this expedition, at the rate of 100 rupees for every individual horseman, which would be a *lac* for every hundred (thousand?); that to those who drew pecuniary stipends in place of holding *jāgirs*, three months' pay in advance should be disbursed; and in like manner also to the *ahadis* and matchlockmen, who numbered 5,000 horse, should a similar advance be made; so that they might not suffer any privations during the campaign from want of funds to meet their current expenses. . . . . It was further commended that the ever-victorious army should hasten to Kabul *via* Bangash-i-bala and Bangash-i-payin, as they were the shortest routes, and thence proceed by way of Ghazni towards Kandahār.'

In spite of all these elaborate preparations, however, Kandahār could not be retaken from the doughty Persians.

'After the fortress of Kandahār had been besieged for three months and a half so that grain and fodder were beginning to be scarce, notwithstanding the praise-worthy exertions of the faithful servants of the crown, owing to their having with them neither a siege train of battering guns, nor skilful artillerymen, the capture of the fortress seemed as distant as ever. For these reasons, and as the winter also was close at hand, a *firmān* was issued to the illustrious Prince (Aurangzeb), to the effect that, as the reduction of the fortress without the aid of heavy guns was impracticable, and there was not now sufficient time remaining for them to arrive in, he should defer its capture till a more convenient opportunity, and start for Hindustan with the "victorious" troops. . . . . the Prince did not deem it expedient to delay any longer, but in obedience to the mandate worthy of all attentions, set out with the "victorious" forces from Kandahār on the 8th of the month of Ramzān this year, for Hindustan,' (3 September, 1649.)

In May 1652, another effort was made to recover Kandahār, but with no better result.

'As it had been determined that the siege of the fortress should be commenced simultaneously with the arrival of (Aurangzeb) at Kandahār, the fortunate Prince, having finished marking out the positions that the royal forces were to occupy, invested the stronghold that very day . . . For two months and eight days the flames of war burned fiercely, and on both sides numerous casualties occurred. . . . . To be brief, the royalists used the most strenuous exertions, and laboured with unremitting zeal and assiduity in carrying forward the parallels and zigzags of attack, and demolishing the crest of the parapet and the bastions. Nevertheless, as the fortress possessed immense strength, and was filled with all the military weapons and stores required for an effective defence, their utmost efforts produced no impression, and, owing to the storm of shot and shell that poured on them like a shower of rain from the fort, they were unable to advance their



trenches beyond the spot they had already brought them to. (The artillery proved ineffective.) As soon as these particulars became known to His Majesty's world-adorning understanding, and he was informed that the capture of the fortress was at that period impracticable; and it also reached the royal ear that the Uzbeks and Amans had come into the neighbourhood of Ghazni, and excited tumults, . . . a *firmān* was issued to the illustrious Prince (Aurangzeb) on the 4th of Shaban, to withdraw his forces from around the fortress, and, deferring its capture till some other period, to take his siege train along with him and set out for Court.' (9 July, 1652.)

Despite the failure of the first two attempts, Shāh Jahān resolved to make yet another effort in 1653. But this time the command was entrusted to Prince Dārā instead of Aurangzeb. To follow Ināyat Khān's narrative :

'As the Prince Buland Ikbāl (Dārā Shukoh), after the return of the army from Kandahār, had guaranteed to conquer that territory, and with this view the provinces of Kabul and Multan had been bestowed upon him, His Royal Highness, on reaching the capital, applied himself to the task of making the requisite arrangements for the campaign. In the course of three months and some days that he remained at Lahore, he made such profuse exertions, that what could not have been otherwise accomplished in a year was effected in this short period.

Dārā left Lahore on 11 February, 1653, and arrived at Kandahār on 23 April, 1653. But a siege of over five months showed that, in spite of Dārā's pompous equipment, Kandahār could not be conquered. A few minor fortresses were, no doubt, reduced, but the main objective remained unfulfilled. Again the old story repeated itself :

'The winter began to set in, all the lead, powder, and cannon-balls were expended, and neither was there any forage left in the meadows, nor provisions with the army. A *firmān* likewise was issued to this effect, that, as the winter was close at hand, and they had already been long detained in Kandahār, if the reduction of the fortress could not be effected just at once, they might stay if necessary some short time longer; or otherwise return immediately . . . . Not one of the loyalist commanders proposed staying any longer. The Prince Buland Ikbāl consequently, on 15th Zi'l ka'da this year, set out from Kandahār for Hindustan.' (27 September, 1653.)

Despite his colossal failure, Prince Dārā was magnificently rewarded. On the 8th of Rabi-u-s sani this year (1653-4), being the expiration of the sixty-fifth lunar year of His Majesty's age, a festival was celebrated with exceeding splendour, and was attended with the usual ceremonies.

In this sublime assembly the Emperor kindly conferred on the Prince Buland Ikbāl a handsome *khilāt* with a gold-embroidered vest, studded with valuable diamonds round the collar ; on both sleeves, and the skirts, pearls had been sewn, and it was worth 50,000 ; and also a *sarband* compound of a single ruby of the purest water, and two magnificent pearls, of the value of a *lac* and 70,000 rupees, and a donation of thirty *lacs* besides. He also distinguished His Royal Highness by the lofty title of Shāh Buland Ikbāl, which had been applied exclusively to himself during his late Majesty's reign ; and since in the days of his Princehood a chair had been placed at the Emperor's suggestion opposite to the throne for him to sit on, he now in like manner directed his Royal Highness to seat himself on a golden chair that had been placed near the sublime throne.'

"Trustworthy estimates," writes V. A. Smith, "place the cost of three sieges of Kandahār (1649, 1652, 1663) at 12 'crores', or 120 millions of rupees, more than half of the annual income of the empire, which is stated to have been 22 'crores', or 220 millions of rupees, in 1648. During Shāh Jahān's reign the value of the rupee in English currency was usually taken at 2s. 3d. The imperial revenue, therefore, may be reckoned as 24½ millions of pounds sterling, or, in round figures, as about 25 millions."

### *The Deccan Campaigns :*

The history of Mughal relations with the Deccan has already been narrated up to the commencement of Shāh Jahān's reign. Akbar had annexed Khāndesh in 1599 and captured Asīrgarh in 1601, when he was suddenly called to the north on account of Salim's rebellion. He had also secured Berar which was then a part of the Nizām-Shāhi dominion of Ahmednagar. Jahāngīr, in spite of his prolonged and elaborate campaigns in the Deccan, was unable to make any headway in the South. This was partly due to the quarrels among the Mughal generals, on the one hand, and the intrepid opposition of Malik Ambar (d. 1626), the Abyssinian minister of Ahmednagar, on the other. However, thanks to the ability and prestige of Shāh Jahān, the *Status quo* was maintained. The Deccan, too, had been the refuge of many a rebel against the Empire. Shāh Jahān himself had sought shelter there, with Malik Ambar and the King of Golkonda, during his rebellion as a prince. At the commencement of his reign the same story was repeated by Jajhar and Khān Jahān Lodi in the course of their insurrections. To prevent further repetitions of this nature, as well as to pursue his ancestral policy to its

logical conclusion, therefore, Shāh Jahān felt it necessary to subdue the three Deccan kingdoms of Ahmednagar, Bijapur, and Golkonda.

*Ahmednagar* : The reduction of Ahmednagar proved comparatively easy owing to the treacherous conduct of its officers, particularly Fath Khān, the unworthy son of Malik Ambar. When this great Abyssinian died in 1626, the Mughal possessions in the Deccan included Khāndesh, Berar, part of Bālāghāt, and the fort of Ahmednagar. But during the disturbed state of the Empire in the last year of Jahāngīr's reign, the Nizām Shāh Murtaza II had virtually re-acquired much of his lost territory, with the connivance of the peccant Mughal governor, Khān Jahān. When the latter, in the early years of Shāh Jahān's reign, made matters worse by his rebellion, a systematic campaign was launched against Ahmednagar (then including Aurangābad, Jalnā, Nasik, Bāglana, and Kalyān). Āzam Khān, the Mughal commander, captured Dharur and Kandahār, and, though his attempt at Parenda was foiled by a combination of Bijapur and Ahmednagar forces, their guerilla tactics, and the shortage of supplies, he succeeded in devastating the whole country and threatened the extinction of the Nizām-Shāhi altogether. The internal weakness of the Sultanate enabled the Mughals to achieve their end without much trouble.

Fath Khān had been imprisoned for a second time, for his contumacious conduct, by Murtaza II. But the present crisis and the entreaties of Murtaza's wife, who was Fath Khān's sister, obtained his release and reappointment as *Vakil* and *Peshwa*. The superseded officer, Muqarrab Khān, on this account went over to the enemy who rewarded him with the title of *Rustam Khān*. Fath Khān showed his gratitude and patriotism by imprisoning his own master and writing to Asaf Khān, 'informing him that he had placed Nizām Shāh, in confinement on account of his evil character and his enmity to the Imperial throne, for which act he hoped to receive some mark of favour. In answer he was told that if he wished to prove his sincerity, he should rid the world of such a wicked being. On receiving this direction, Fath Khān secretly made away with Nizām Shāh, but gave out that he had died a natural death. He placed Nizām Shāh's son Husain, a lad ten years old, on the throne as his successor. He reported these facts to the Imperial Court, and was directed to send the jewels and valuables of the late King, and his own eldest son as a hostage. Though Fath Khān temporised



SHARMA : *Crescent in India*



Mum Tāj Begam

for a time to fulfil this, he ultimately yielded and sent to the Emperor 30 elephants, 9 horses, and jewellery worth 8,00,000 rupees.' He also read the *khutbah*, and struck coins in Shāh Jahān's name, upon which Shāh Jahān left Burhānpur on 6 March, 1632, and returned to the capital.

"With Shāh Jahān's return to the North, the first stage in the subjugation of Ahmednagar came to a close... Mainly, two considerations affected Shāh Jahān's decision to return to the North : first the outbreak of a severe famine which drained his resources and inconvenienced his men, and second, the death of his beloved wife, Mumtāz Mahāl, which grieved him intensely.\* He was disgusted with the Deccan and was unwilling to remain there. It was a human frailty which overcame him on this occasion, otherwise he seldom left things half done."

But very soon Daulatābad proved the storm-centre of a fresh struggle. A dispute arose between Fath Khān and Shāhu (whose allegiance to the Mughals has been previously mentioned) over certain grants of *jagirs* which were claimed by both. Consequently, Shāhu, with the aid of the Bijāpuris, prepared to besiege Fath Khān in Daulatābad.

The latter was much incensed against the Nizām-Shāhis, and had no faith in them ; so he wrote to Khān-khānan Mahābat Khān, informing him that Shāhuji Bhonsla was preparing to bring a force from Bijapur against him, and that as the fortress was ill-provisioned, there was great probability of its being taken, unless Mahābat Khān came to his assistance. If the Khān came quickly, he would surrender the fortress, and would himself proceed to the Imperial Court. The Khān-khānan accordingly sent forward his son, Khān-zamān, with an advance force, and he

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\* She was, it will be remembered, the daughter of Asaf Khān, and hence Nūr Jahān's niece. At the time of her death she was about 40 years of age, and had borne her husband eight sons and six daughters. Their married life of 19 years was unique in its happiness. She was deeply loved by Shāh Jahān for whom she was really a guide, philosopher and friend. Her sudden death during the fourteenth child-birth, at Burhānpur, shocked and stupefied her husband. He did not appear at the *Jarokha* for a week, and despised luxuries for two years. Like the Prisoner of Chillon's his hair suddenly turned white. Shāh Jahān lived for 35 years more to mourn her irreparable loss. 'Empire has no sweetness, life itself has no relish left for me now,' he declared. His abiding love found its eternal monument in the Taj, perhaps the most unique enshrinement of a lover's heart yet to be seen in this world.

himself followed on the 9th Jumadas-sani. He reached Daulatābad on 1 March, 1633. In the meantime, the Bijapur army met with a reverse at the hands of Khān-zamān, and 'so they made offers of an arrangement to Fath Khān. They offered to leave the fortress in his possession, to give him three *lacs* of *pagodas* in cash, and to throw provisions into the fort. That ill-starred foolish fellow, allured by these promises, broke his former engagement (with the Mughals), and entered into an alliance with them. When Khān-khānan, who was at Zafarnagar, was informed of these proceedings, he wrote to Khān-zamān directing him to make every exertion for the reduction of the fortress, and for the punishment of the traitor and the Bijapuris.' When Khān-khānan joined his son in the attack on Daulatābad, and stormed the fortress with shot and shell, Fath Khān 'woke up from his sleep of heedlessness and security.' He saw that Daulatābad could not resist the Imperial arms and the vigour of the Imperial commander. To save the honour of his own and Nizām Shāh's women, he sent his eldest son Abdur-Rasūl to Khān-khānan (laying the blame of his conduct on Shāhuji and the Adil-khānis). He begged for forgiveness and for a week's delay to enable him to remove his and Nizām Shāh's family from the fortress, while his son remained as a hostage in Khān-khānan's power.

'On the 19th Zi-l hijja, Fath Khān came out of the fort and delivered it up (17 June, 1653). Khān-khānan went into the fortress, and had the *khutbah* read in the Emperor's name.' The boy prince Nizām Shāh was taken captive and imprisoned in the fortress of Gwalior. 'The crimes of Fath Khān were mercifully pardoned; he was admitted into the Imperial service, and received a *khilāt* and a grant of two *lacs* of rupees per annum. His property also was relinquished to him, but that of Nizām Shāh was confiscated.' (21 September, 1633.)

Although this event virtually extinguished the Nizām-Shāhi dynasty for ever, it did not mean the total subjugation of Ahmednagar at once. The Nizām-Shāhi and Adil-Shāhi officers still held out in some outposts which they would not surrender without a struggle. More than others, Shāhuji, with his strong-hold on Junnar, Poona, and Chākan, now proved as intrepid and resourceful as Malik Ambar had been in the previous reign. He created a *roi faineant* round whom he tried to rally all the Deccani forces, both Nizām-Shāhi and Adil-Shāhi. But the Mughals proved too strong for him; and he had to yield fort after fort to them. Murtaza Khān, governor of Daulatābad, Allah Verdi Khān, governor of Painghāt, Khān Daurān, Khān-zamān, and other Mughal generals hunted Shāhu from place to place. Finally, Shāh Jahān himself left

Agra on 21 September, 1635 to direct the operations and reached Burhānpur in January, 1636. One by one Shāhu's supporters and allies were either won over or neutralized by bribes and threats. Udgir, Ausa, Māhuli, and other fastnesses soon fell into Mughal hands.

'When Abdu-l Latif, the envoy to Golkonda, approached the city, Kutbu-l Mulk came forth five *kos* to receive him, and conducted him to the city with great honour...He had the *khutbah* read aloud in the name of the Emperor; he several times attended when *khutbah* was read, and bestowed gifts upon the reader, and he had coins struck in the Emperor's name, and sent specimens of them to Court.'

Adil Khān, finding that his territory was ravaged by the Mughal armies, at last also submitted. He agreed to pay a tribute equivalent to twenty *lacs* in jewels, elephants, etc., and engaged that if Shāhu returned and surrendered Junnar and the other forts in the Nizām-Shāhi territory to the Imperial officers, he would take him into his service; but if Shāhu did not do so, he would assist the Imperial forces in reducing the forts and punishing Shāhu.... There was, therefore, no reason for the Emperor's staying any longer, and would be a great favour if he (Shāh Jahān) would proceed to the capital, so that the *raiyats* and people of Bijapur might return peacefully to their avocations. The Emperor graciously consented, and resolved to go and spend the rainy season at Māndu. Adil Khān's tribute.... arrived; and was accepted. The Emperor confirmed to him the territory of Bijapur and the fortress of Parenda, which had formerly belonged to Nizāmu-l Mulk, but the commandant had surrendered to Adil Khān for a bribe. He also confirmed to him all the country of Konkan on the sea-shore, which had been formerly held half by him and half by Nizāmu-l Mulk.' (6 May, 1636).

*Aurangzeb's first Viceroyalty* : 'The Emperor appointed Prince Aurangzeb to the government of the Dakhin. This country contains 64 forts, 53 of which are situated on hills; the remaining 11 are in the plain. It is divided into four *subas* : 1. *Daulatābad*, with Ahmednagar and other districts, which they call the *suba* of the Dakhin. The capital of this province, which belonged to Nizāmu-l Mulk, was formerly Ahmednagar, and afterwards Daulatābad. 2. *Telingana*... This is situated in the *suba* of Bālāghāt. 3. *Khāndesh*. The fortress of this province is Asīr, and the capital is Burhānpur, situated four *kos* from Asīr. 4. *Berar*. The capital of this province is Ellichpur, and its famous fortress is called Gawil. It is built on the top of a hill, and is noted above all the fortresses in that country for strength and security. The whole of the third province and a part of the fourth is in the Payin-ghāt. The '*jama*' or total revenue of the four provinces is two Arabs of *dāms*, equivalent to five



*crores of rupees.*' Both from a civil and military point of view, Aurangzeb's appointment proved particularly happy for the Empire.

*Golkonda* : The abject surrender of Kutb Shāh to the imperious demands of Shāh Jahān, described above, was due to several causes. In the first place, the Kutb-Shāhi had felt the might of the Mughal arms as early as 1629, when Bakir Khān the Imperial Governor of Orissa, captured the strategic stronghold of Mansurgarh in the north of the kingdom. This was followed, a year later, by the invasion of Telingana by Nasiri Khān, the seizure of Kandhār, and the reduction of nearly a third of that province. Secondly, Golkonda was weakened by her internal squabbles. Mir Jumla, a Persian adventurer from Ardistan, who started life as a jeweller, had entered the service of Kutb Shāh, and risen to the position of the prime-minister. Ultimately, by virtue of his ability also as a general, he threatened to usurp the throne itself. Mir Jumla, 'in whose hands was the entire administration of Kutbu-l Mulk's kingdom,' according to the *Shāh Jahān-nāmā*, 'had, after a severe struggle with the Karnātakis, brought under subjection, in addition to a powerful fort, a tract of country measuring 150 *kos* in length, and 20 or 30 in breadth, and yielding a revenue of 40 *lacs* of rupees. It also contained mines teeming with diamonds, and no one of Kutbu-l Mulk's ancestors had ever been able to gain possession of any portion of it. Having destroyed several strong forts built by the Karnātakis, he had brought this country into his power.' His jealous master fearing Mir Jumla's growing power imprisoned his son. So, Mir Jumla appealed to the Mughal Court for intervention.

*Aurangzeb's Second Viceroyalty* : The ambitious and aggressive Aurangzeb, who had been viceroy in the Deccan for eight years, from 1636 to 1644, was again in the south at this time. In 1637 he had gone to the capital for his own marriage with Dilras Bāno Begam, daughter of Shāh Nawāz Khān. Again in 1644 he went to Agra to see his sister Jahānara who was dangerously ill, being accidentally burnt, her skirts having caught fire over a candle. "She hovered between life and death for four months, and was not finally cured until November." Mysteriously enough, when Aurangzeb was still in Agra, he was superseded in the South, and after a little over eight months sent to Gujarat (6 February, 1645). In January 1647, he was transferred to Balkh, Badakhshān and Kandahār, whence, for no fault of his, he had to return discomfited in 1652. Aurang-

zeb's pride was mortified, and he desired to redeem his reputation by persisting in the futile north-western campaign. But Shāh Jahān had lost faith in him; he said, 'if I had believed you capable of taking Kandahār, I should not have recalled your army.' Nevertheless, as Lane-Poole has observed, the campaigns in Afghanistan and beyond the Hindukush, "were of the greatest service to Aurangzeb. They put him in touch with the imperial army, and enabled him to prove his courage and tactics in the eyes of the best soldiers in the land. The generals learnt to appreciate him at his true value, and the men discovered that their prince was as cool and steady a leader as the best officer in India. He had gone over the mountains a reputed devotee, with no military record to give him prestige. He came back an approved general: a prince, whose wisdom, coolness, endurance, and resolution had been tested and acclaimed in three arduous campaigns. The wars over the north-west frontier had ended as such wars have ended since, but they had done for Aurangzeb what they did for Stewart and Roberts: they placed their leader in the front rank of Indian generals."

Such was Aurangzeb when he assumed, for the second time, the viceroyalty of the Deccan (1653). Though he lingered for about nine months at Burhānpur, enthralled by the charms of Hirā Bāi *alias* Zainābādi Mahāl, he soon took up his headquarters at Daulatābad, and set about improving the economic condition of his new charge. This, however, we shall consider a little later. With his economic resources considerably increased by his wise fiscal reforms, burning for an opportunity to restore his prestige with his father by some fresh conquests, and not a little enthused at the prospect of striking a blow at the heretical Shiah Sultans of the Deccan, Aurangzeb grasped the occasion provided by the invitation of Mir Jumla, with great avidity. Determined and aggressive Imperialism was never at a loss for excuses!

Golkonda was in arrears of tribute. Abdul-Ilā Kutb Shāh was ordered to make good the dues at once. He was also asked to release the interned members of Mir Jumla's family. But the real attitude and intentions of Aurangzeb are revealed in his unmistakable mandate to his son, Muhammad Sultan, whom he sent in advance.

'Qutb-ul-Mulk is a coward and will probably offer no resistance. Surround his palace with your artillery and also post a detachment to

bar his flight to Golkonda. But before doing so send a carefully chosen messenger to him, saying, "I had so long been expecting that you would meet me and hospitably ask me to stay with you. But, as you have not done so, I have myself come to you." Immediately on delivering this message, attack him impetuously, and, if you can manage it, *lighten his neck of the burden of his head*. The best means of achieving this plan are cleverness, promptitude, and lightness of hand.'

Though the Kutb Shāh's neck was not lightened of the burden of his head, the expected happened. The fabulous riches of Golkonda were plundered, and Aurangzeb, who joined his son on 6 February, 1656, would have wholly annexed the kingdom, but for Shāh Jahān's countermanding *firmān*. Accordingly, the siege was raised on 30th March. Peace was concluded with the Kutb Shāh whose daughter was also married to Aurangzeb's son, Muhammad Sultan, who (by a secret understanding) was to succeed Abdu-lla on the throne of Golkonda; considerable remissions were made in the tribute due from the Kutb Shāh; the district of Rangir (Manikdrug and Chinnoor) was ceded to the Empire; and Mir Jumla was admitted into the Imperial service, given the title of Muazzam Khān with rank of 6,000, and on the death of Sadullah Khān appointed prime-minister of Shāh Jahān. "The deceased minister," according to Smith, "although unfortunate in his military adventures was reputed one of the best Muhammadan administrators whom India has known."

*Bijapur*: For twenty years, since the treaty of 1636, Bijapur had enjoyed considerable prosperity under her able Sultan Muhammad Adil Shāh. But, unfortunately, this great ruler died on 4 November, 1656, leaving his kingdom to his eighteen years old son and factions. Aurangzeb, ever watchful for an opportunity, obtained permission from Shāh Jahān 'to settle the affairs of Bijapur in any way he thought fit.' Though Bijapur was not a vassal state, he put forward a claim to settle its succession on the absurd plea that the boy-Sultan was not the son of his predecessor but only an obscure pretender.

The Mughal armies once again flooded the Adil Shāhi territory. Mir Jumla was called from the north to co-operate with Aurangzeb. The important fortress of Bidar (which had come into the possession of Bijapur in 1609) was the first to be besieged. At the end of March, 1657, however, Bidar fell after a gallant resistance.

'The commandant of the fortress with great humility, sued for quarter, and as he was mortally wounded and unable to move, he sent his sons

with the keys of the fortress. They were graciously received by the Prince who presented them with *khilāts*, and promised them the Imperial favour. On the day after giving up the keys, the Prince entered the city, and proceeding to a mosque which had been built 200 years before, in the reign of the Bahmani Sultans, he caused the *khutbah* to be read in the name of the Emperor.... This strong fortress was taken in twenty-seven days. Twelve *lacs* of rupees in money, and eight *lacs* of rupees in lead, gunpowder, stores, and other munition of a fortress, were obtained, besides two hundred and thirty guns.'

Next, 'Intelligence reached the Prince that large bodies of the forces of Adil Khān were collecting at Kulbarga, and preparing for war. He consequently sent Mahābat Khān with 15,000 well-mounted cavalry to chastise these forces, and not to leave one trace of cultivation in that country. Every building and habitation was to be thrown down, and the land was to be made a dwelling for the owls and kites.... Mahābat Khān (II) then ravaged Kalyāṇi, and continued his march. Every day the black-coated masses of the enemy appeared in the distance, but they continued to retreat....'

Kalyāṇi, the ancient capital of the Chālukyas (40 miles west of Bidar) was besieged by the Mughals in May, 1657; it capitulated, after a brave defence, on 1st August, 1657. Now the road to Bijapur lay open to the invaders. But, as in the case of Golkonda before, Shāh Jahān at the nick of the moment called off the campaign. Peace, however, left Bidar, Kalyāṇi, and Parenda in the possession of the Mughals. The Sultan also agreed to pay an indemnity of 1½ crores, a third of which was remitted by Shāh Jahān. The illness of Shāh Jahān and the ensuing disorders soon changed the whole face of affairs.

### *The War of Succession :*

The sickening tale of the fratricidal war of succession need not detain us long. Though it lasted only a little less than a year, from the illness of Shāh Jahān, in September 1657, to the coronation of Aurangzeb, in July 1658, its trailing cloud of crime cast a portentous shadow over the future of the Empire. Kāmrān, Askari, Hindāl, Hākim, Salim, Khusru, and Khurram had all been guilty of rebellion against their own ruling house. Humāyun, otherwise humane, had been forced into a fratricidal war in spite of himself by the treachery of his brother; Jahāngīr, out of sheer impatience, had opened a dark chapter in the history of the Mughal Empire for the emulation of his successors; Shāh Jahān had secured his throne by the virtual murder of his brothers Khusru, Parvez, Shāhriyar and

other relations. Aurangzeb was only following too closely the examples of his predecessors. The unfortunate, though perhaps, unconscious motto of the house seemed to be : '*Kingship knows no kinship*' ; the watchword of the brothers who were now at death-grips with one another appeared to be : '*takht ya takhta*'—either crown or coffin.

Princes Dārā Shukoh, Shujā, Aurangzeb, and Murād were all uterine brothers. Their ages were respectively 43, 41, 39, and 33 years, at the time of this fateful struggle. The eldest seemed to be the father's favourite, and would have normally succeeded to the throne. Though he spent most of his time at the capital with Shāh Jahān, he was nominally the viceroy of the Punjab and the North-Western Provinces. Shujā was governor of Bengal and Orissa ; Aurangzeb of the Deccan ; and Murād of Gujrat. All four were reputed soldiers though each of the other three yielded the palm to Aurangzeb in point of steadiness and strength of character, astuteness, and generalship. In religious outlook also, Aurangzeb was as determined to uphold orthodox Sunni Islam as his brothers were either latitudinarian or namby-pamby. Dārā was eclectic like Akbar, Shujā was Shiah, and Murād, at least for political purposes, a hater of heresies. Hence the first combination of the younger two against the two elder ; once the discomfiture of the former was achieved the latter were quits. Aurangzeb had the same axe for all, though Dārā was executed, to all appearances, on a charge of heresy and Murād on a charge of murder. Shujā escaped beyond the north-eastern frontier only to be done to death by the Arakanese. Dārā's son Suleimān Shukoh, was not treated more unkindly than Aurangzeb's own son, Muhammad Sultan, for crimes which were not dissimilar in the eyes of the fanatical Aurangzeb : the former had fought for his father, and the latter for his father-in-law (and uncle), Shujā, who were equally heretical and therefore equally hateful,—both were imprisoned and then 'sent to hell.' But in spite of all this, Aurangzeb was not a blood-thirsty fiend : as Smith writes, "Aurangzeb, while not shrinking from any severity deemed necessary to secure his throne, had no taste for indiscriminate, superfluous fought for his father, and the latter for his father-in-law (and uncle) of dispute by the sons of his brothers, was willing to allow the youths to live." Nay, he went a step further and married his two daughters, the third and the fifth respectively, to Sipihīr Shukoh (younger son of Dārā) and Izid Bakhsh (son of Murād).

As at a signal, straight the sons prepare  
 For open force, and rush to sudden war ;  
 Meeting like winds broke loose upon the main  
 To prove by arms whose fate it was to reign.

From the point of view of our study of the Empire no purpose would be served by going into the details of this war. When all is stated, it only illustrated (a) the basic weakness of a system that could be set at naught at the merest illness of the Emperor ; (b) the darker side of the family tradition of the house of Timūr that exalted self and power above everything else ; and (c) the consummate ability of Aurangzeb in diplomacy and war in contrast with the political impotency of his brothers. The circumstances which led to the discomfiture and death of the weaker parties may be briefly stated as follows :—

1. When Shāh Jahān fell ill, in September 1657, he formally nominated Dārā Shukoh his successor, to avert the possible tragedy of a war of succession.

2. In spite of this, on the 5th December, 1657, Murād proclaimed himself Emperor at Ahmedābad, struck coins and had the *Khutbah* read in his own name.

3. Shujā did the same at Rājmahāl in Bengal, and marched with an army and fleet towards Benares which he reached on 24 January, 1658.

4. Aurangzeb, quick to apprehend the situation, but too shrewd to precipitate matters, proposed to act, not in his own name, but in the interests of Islam and his younger brother Murād. The Empire was to be saved from the heresies of Dārā and Shujā ; a third of the booty was to be given to Murād, together with the Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Sind ; the rest to be retained by Aurangzeb himself.

5. Mir Jumla who was called to the north, by order of Shāh Jahān, was not allowed by Aurangzeb to proceed from the Deccan. He was arrested and his army thus made available for Aurangzeb. Smith says, "The circumstances indicate that probably Mir Jumla connived at his own arrest. Certainly he did not resent it, nor did he fail to continue to give his ally invaluable support when released. Mir Jumla's fine park of artillery proved to be extremely useful."

6. At the beginning of February 1658, Aurangzeb too assumed Imperial prerogatives. On 3rd April he crossed the Narmada and joined forces with Murād, near Ujjain.

7. On 15 April, 1658, the Imperial army, under Kāsim Khān and Rāja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur, was defeated at Dharmat (14 miles s. w. of Ujjain) by the rebel Princes. Jaswant Singh fled from the battlefield, but his wife would not give him shelter after such rank cowardice !

8. Dārā Shukoh then encountered the rebels at Samugarh (8 miles to the east of Agra fort), on 29 May, 1658. A mere accident in this

well-contested battle, in which the Rajputs 'did honour to the traditions of their race,' turned the tide in favour of Aurangzeb. "*The battle (of Samugarh)*," as Smith says, "*readly decided the war of succession*. All the subsequent efforts to retrieve the cause then lost, whether made by Dārā Shikoh himself, by his son Suleiman Shikoh or by Shujā and Murād Baksh, were in vain. Aurangzeb proved himself to be far the ablest of the princes in every phase of the contest, which was not ended until two years later, in May 1660, when Shujā met his miserable fate."

The success of Aurangzeb was largely due to his better equipment and generalship. Manucci observes that although Dārā's army made 'a brave and splendid show,' the greater number of them 'were not very warlike, they were butchers, barbers, blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors, and such like. It is true that on their horses and with their arms they looked well at a review; but they had no heart, and knew nothing of war.' (*Pepys*, p. 53) 'Dārā,' he further points out, 'had not sufficient experience in matters of wars, having been brought up among the dancing-women and buffoons of his father, and gave undue credit to the words of the traitors.'

9. On 8th June 1658 Aurangzeb took possession of Agra fort and imprisoned Shāh Jahān therein for life. Shāh Jahān died there on 22nd January, 1666, gazing for the last time on the tomb of his beloved wife with whom he now lies buried.

10. Murād was apprehended on 25 June, 1658, and finally imprisoned and executed at Gwalior, in December 1661. A charge of murder was brought against him by the son of Ali Naki who was Murād's one time *Diwān*. The prince was tried and condemned by a Kazi 'with all the forms of law.'

11. On 21 July, 1658, Aurangzeb had himself crowned, though his formal enthronement was deferred until June 1659.

12. Suleimān Shukoh had defeated Shujā at Bahādurpūr (near Benares) in February 1658. Aurangzeb again routed him at Khajwah (Fathpur District), on 5 January, 1659. Thence he fled to Arakan where he met with death in May, 1660.

13. Dārā was hunted from place to place through Multān, Sind, Kathiawār, and Gujarāt. He was betrayed once near Ajmer, by Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur. Finally, while he was trying to escape to Persia, he was again betrayed by Malik Jawan Khān, the Afghan chief of Dhandar (near Bolan Pass), on 9 June, 1653. The death of his beloved wife Nadira Begam (daughter of Parvez) had much distracted Dārā. 'Death was painted in his eyes.... Everywhere he saw only destruction, and losing his senses became utterly heedless of his own affairs.' In the words of Khāfi Khān, 'Mountain after mountain of trouble thus pressed upon the heart of Dārā, grief was added to grief, sorrow to sorrow, so that his mind no longer retained its equilibrium.... At the end of Zi-l hijja, 1069 (September 1659), the order was given for Dārā Shukoh to be put to death under a legal opinion of the lawyers, because he had apostatized from the law, had vilified religion, and had allied himself with heresy and infidelity.

After he was slain, his body was placed in a *howdah* and carried round the city (as once before when he was alive). So once alive and once dead he was exposed to the eyes of all men, and many wept over his fate. He was buried in the tomb of Humāyun.'

Dārā, like Khusrū, was an enlightened and popular Prince. Bernier, who was an eye-witness to these tragic happenings, records : 'Everywhere I observed the people weeping, and lamenting the fate of Dārā in the most touching language....from every quarter I heard piercing and distressing shrieks....men, women and children wailing as if some mighty calamity had happened to themselves.'

Several works are attributed to Dārā Shukoh. (1) *Sir-ul-asrar*, a translation of the 50 *Upanishads*; (2) *Majmua-ul-Baharain*, a treatise on the technical terms of Hindu *Vedānta* with *Sufi* equivalents; (3) *Dialogue with Bābā Lāl*; (4) *Sakinat-ul-awliya* containing lives of the Muslim saints; (5) *Raisala-i-Lagnuma*; and (6) a Persian translation of the *Atharva-veda*. The charges levelled against him were (a) that he conversed with Brāhmaṇs, Yogis, and Sanyāsīs; (b) that he regarded the Hindu *Vedas* as revealed literature; (c) that he wore rings and ornaments with the inscription 'Prabhu' on them; and (d) that he disregarded the injunctions of Islam regarding the observance of the fast of Ramzān, etc.

'Dārā,' writes Bernier, 'was not deficient in good qualities: he was courteous in conversation, quick in repartee, polite, and extremely liberal: but he entertained too exalted an opinion of himself; believed he could accomplish everything by the powers of his own mind, and imagined that there existed no man from whose counsel he could derive benefit. He spoke disdainfully of those who ventured to advise him, and thus deterred his sincerest friends from disclosing the secret machinations of his brothers. He was also very irascible; apt to menace: abusive and insulting even to the greatest Omrahs; but this anger was seldom more than momentary. Born a Muhammadan, he continued to join in the exercises of that religion; but although thus publicly professing his adherence to its faith, Dārā was in private a Gentile with Gentiles and a Christian with Christians. He had constantly about him some of the Pundits or Gentile doctors, on whom he bestowed large pensions. He had, moreover, for some time lent a willing ear to the suggestions of the Rev. Fr. Busee, a Jesuit, in the truth and propriety of which he began to acquiesce.'

#### GOLDEN AGE OF THE EMPIRE :

The Empire for which the brothers fought so furiously was yet to grow to its fullest extent in the next reign; but it is certain that it was never more prosperous than during the thirty years (1627-



57) of Shāh Jahān's rule. In spite of the early rebellions, which were soon crushed ; in spite of the foreign wars of aggression beyond the frontiers, which cost enormously, with no return whatsoever ; in spite of the famine in the Deccan and Gujarat, which devastated a vast portion of the country ; and in spite of the constant fighting in the Deccan, which while it resulted in the subjugation of Ahmednagar, Golkonda, and Bijapur, also involved a great drain in the resources of the Empire, the age of Shāh Jahān showed much that was glorious, and unmistakable signs of unique prosperity, to justify this period being described as the Golden Age of the Empire. Rāi Bhār Mal, in his *Lubb-at-tawārikh*, records with admiration :

The means employed by the King (Shāh Jahān) in these happy times to protect and nourish his people, his knowledge of what made for their welfare, his administration by honest and intelligent officers, the auditing of accounts, his care of the crown-lands and their tenants, encouragement of agriculture and the collection of revenue, together with his punishment and admonition of evil doers, oppressors and malcontents, all tended to the prosperity of the Empire. The pargana which had brought in three *lacs* in Akbar's reign now yielded ten, though some fell short, and those who increased the revenue by careful agriculture were rewarded, and *vice versa*. The expenditure of former reigns was not a fourth of the cost of this reign, and yet the King amassed a treasure which would have taken years to accumulate under his predecessors.\*

European critics, judging by modern standards, are rather chary to admit the truth of the above description, except grudgingly and with qualifications. Thus we come across statements like the following :

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\* According to Moreland, " Under Akbar the rapidly increasing Imperial expenditure was more than covered by the growth of the Empire, and reserves in cash were accumulated. Jahāngīr neglected the administration, . . . and . . . the annual income from the Reserved tracts fell to 50 lakhs of rupees, while the annual expenditure was 150 lakhs, and the accumulated treasure was drawn on for large sums. *Shāh Jahān on his accession, put the finances on a sound basis. He reserved tracts calculated to yield 150 lakhs, as income, fixed the normal expenditure at 100 lakhs and had thus a large recurring balance for emergencies. Expenditure rose far above this limit but careful administration raised the reserved income to 300 lakhs (the figure given in Maāsir-ul-Umra) by 1647, and to nearly 400 lakhs by the end of the reign. Aurangzeb at first aimed to maintain the balance between income and expenditure, but his long wars in the Deccan were ruinous, and at his death only 10 or 12 kroris of rupees were left in the treasury, a sum which was rapidly dissipated by his successors.*" (*The Agrarian System of Moslem India*, p. 126.) All italics mine.

"The reign of Shāh Jahān, which covers nearly thirty years, from 1627 to 1658, is *usually regarded* as the golden period of Mughal rule. It was *outwardly* a period of great prosperity. Foreign wars were few and unimportant; at home there was peace and *apparent* plenty, and the royal treasury seemed full to overflowing. *Yet despite* the vast treasure which Shāh Jahān had inherited from his father and grandfather; *despite* the growth of a large trade between India and western Asia, which was *rendered possible by the existence of a strong Government in Persia*; *despite* the establishment of the export trade with Europe, which certainly brought *some* profit to the Mughal Empire: and *in spite* of other *apparent advantages*, the reign of Shāh Jahān sounded the knell of the Empire and of its economic system." The writer further elaborates: "To meet the expenditure of Shāh Jahān's *extravagant bureaucracy* and to pay for the splendid architectural monuments, which alone would render his reign memorable, an *insupportable burden was laid upon the agricultural and industrial masses*, upon whom the very life of the Empire ultimately depended. *Thus was engendered the national insolvency* which, becoming more marked during the reign of his successor, proved one of the most potent factors in the subsequent disintegration of the great organization which he inherited from Akbar and Jahāngīr."

We need not seek to extenuate the crimes and shortcomings of Shāh Jahān's reign; but it is futile not to admit the undoubted prosperity of the period under survey. Discussion of 'extravagant bureaucracies' and 'insupportable burdens laid upon the agricultural and industrial masses,' as well as the 'engendering of national insolvency,' would land us in controversies far beyond the scope of this work; but it is certainly not permissible to father the sins of his successors upon Shāh Jahān. In the first place the splendid 'extravagance' of Shāh Jahān was never imitated by his puritanical successor Aurangzeb; on the contrary, the solicitude for the agriculturists, whatever its motive, was continued by Aurangzeb; and lastly, the springs of Aurangzeb's actions are not to be traced to the initiative of his father, whom he hated, imprisoned, and superseded. The complexity of forces that brought about 'the disintegration of the great organization' of the Mughal Empire will be discussed in the proper place. To cite another example of the undue severity of biased criticism Vincent Smith observes:

"Shāh Jahān has received from most modern historians, and especially from Elphinstone, treatment *unduly favourable*. The Magnificence of his court, the extent and wealth of his empire, the comparative peace which was preserved during his reign, and the unique beauty of his architectural master-piece, the Tāj, have combined to dazzle the vision of his modern

biographers, most of whom have slurred over his many crimes and exaggerated such virtues as he possessed."

In his zeal to correct this 'unduly favourable' picture of Shāh Jahān, Smith has overshot the mark, and 'slurred over his many' virtues and 'exaggerated such' crimes as he was guilty of. Apart from Shāh Jahān's personal failings as a son, as a brother, as a father, and finally as a widower, "In affairs of state," says Smith, "he was cruel, treacherous, and unscrupulous"; though he does not fail to add "*perhaps not worse than most other kings of his time*, but certainly not better." Then, "He had little skill as a military leader," the organization and command of his army was inefficient. *Shāh Jahān's 'justice' was merely the savage, unfeeling ferocity of the ordinary Asiatic despot, exercised without respect of persons and without the slightest tincture of compassion.*" (Shades of Charles I and Louis XIV bear witness!) Peter Mundy and "Other travellers bear similar testimony to the *misgovernment of the country.*" Bernier, "a highly trained observer," who was "deeply interested as a student in what he saw," "free from personal bias for or against either Shāh Jahān or Aurangzeb," is one that "cannot be brushed aside" as "a hostile European witness." He speaks of the actual state of the country at the most brilliant period of Mughal rule, when the dynasty was fully established, rich beyond compare, and undisturbed by foreign aggression." His "pessimistic observations" and "gloomy impressions" regarding "the upper provinces" are then faithfully cited: 'Thus do ruin and desolation overspread the land' (Bernier's *Travels*, p. 231). "Similar ruin and tyranny had been the fate of the Deccan during the years from 1644 to 1653, in the interval between the first and second viceroyalty of Aurangzeb," when the great famine devastated the Deccan and Gujarat. "The prodigal expenditure and unexampled splendour of the court which occupy so prominent a place in most of the current descriptions of Shāh Jahān's rule had therefore *a dark background of suffering and misery seldom exposed to view.*" Then follow "a few phrases of painful vividness" from the pen of the official historian, Abdu-l Hamid, who, "contrary to the frequent practice of writers of his kind, makes no attempt to disguise the horror of the calamity."

Smith denies the 'gracious kindness and bounty' of Shāh Jahān described by the *same* writer; for, "So far as Mundy saw, *nothing*

*to help the suffering people was done by the government ; though, "Meantime, the camp of Shāh Jahān at Burhānpur was filled with provisions of all kinds." Of course "No statistics are on record" ; but we are not without imagination. Though, "Even the nature of the consequent pestilence is not mentioned," "it is almost certain that cholera must have carried off myriads of victims." For, "Sir Richard Temple, the editor of Mundy's work, has good reason for saying that 'it is worthwhile to read Mundy's unimpassioned, matter-of-fact, observations on this famine,' in order to realize the immensity of the difference in the conditions of life as existing under the rule of the Mughal dynasty when at the height of its glory and those prevailing under the modern British government."* (*Oxford History of India*, pp. 415-18, 393-4.)

Nevertheless, Elphinstone is perfectly right when he describes the Age of Shāh Jahān as "*the most prosperous ever known in India, . . . together with a larger share of good government than often falls to the lot of Asiatic nations.* Notwithstanding Shāh Jahān's love of ease and pleasure, . . . he never remitted his vigilance over his internal government ; and by this, and the judicious choice of his ministers, he prevented any relaxation in the system, and even introduced important improvements—such as his survey of the Deccan." \*

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\* "His ministers were men of the highest ability. Sad-Allah 'Allami, a converted Hindu, was the most upright statesman of his age ; and Ali Mardān and Asaf Khān were men of approved integrity and energy." (Lane-Poole, *Aurangzeb*, p. 15).

The improvement of the administration in the Deccan was the work of Aurangzeb and Murshid Quli Khān. The former at that time was Viceroy in the Deccan. The latter was a native of Khurāsān who had come to India in the train of Ali Mardān Khān, the Persian Governor of Kandahār who had come over to the Mughal side. He is said to have combined in himself 'the valour of a soldier with the administrative capacity of a civil servant.'

The maladministration of predecessors had considerably reduced the treasury and revenues. "At this time the civil and military expenditure of the Deccan, exclusive of the salary derived by the officers from their *jagirs*, produced an annual deficit of Rs. 20,36,000, which was made good by drawing on the reserve stored in the treasuries of the Deccan . . . . When appointing him to the Deccan, Shāh Jahān had urged Aurangzeb to pay special attention to the improvement of the peasantry and the extension of cultivation. Aurangzeb had promised to do his best for these objects . . . . The new *ḍiwān's* reform consisted in extending Todar Mal's system to the Deccan. First he worked hard to gather the scattered *ryots* together and

"Khāfi Khān, the best historian of those times," Elphinstone continues, "gives his opinion, that, although Akbar was pre-eminent as a conqueror and a lawgiver, yet *for the order and arrangement of his territory and finances and the good administration of every department of the state, no prince ever reigned in India that could be compared to Shāh Jahān* . . .

"Mandelsloe describes Agra as at least twice as large as Isfahan (then in its greatest glory), with fine streets, good shops, and numerous baths and caravanserais. Nor was this prosperity confined to royal residences: all travellers speak with admiration of the grandeur of the cities, even in remote provinces, and of the fertile and productive countries in which they stood.

"Those who look on India in its present state may be inclined to suspect the native writers of exaggerating its former prosperity; but the deserted cities, ruined palaces, and choked-up aqueducts which we still see, with the great reservoirs and embankments in the midst of jungles, and the decayed cause-ways, wells, and caravanserais of the royal roads, concur with the evidence of contemporary travellers in convincing us that those historians had good grounds for their commendation .

"Shāh Jahān was the most magnificent prince that ever appeared in India. His retinue, his state establishments, his largesses, and all the pomp of his court, were much increased beyond the excess they had attained to under his predecessors. His expenses in these departments can only be palliated by the fact, that they neither occasioned any increase to his exactions, nor any embarrassment to his finances. . . .

(Foot-note continued from p. 501.)

restore the normal life of the villages by giving them their full population and proper chain of officers. Everywhere wise *amins* and honest surveyors were deputed to measure the land, to prepare the record of well marked out holdings (*raqba*), and to distinguish arable land from rocky soils and water-courses. Where a village had lost its headman (*muqadam*) he took care to appoint a new headman from the persons whose character gave the best promise of their readiness to promote cultivation and take sympathetic care of the peasantry. The poorer *ryots* were granted loans (*taqavi*) from the public treasury, for the purchase of cattle, seeds and other needful materials of agriculture, and the advance was recovered at harvest by instalments."

His second reform was to adapt the system to the varying needs of each locality. Thirdly, "The revenue at the fixed rate of so many Rs. per *bhiga* was assessed and collected after considering the quantity and quality of the crop from seed-time to harvest and its market price, and actually measuring the sown area. This became the prevalent system in the *subahs* of Mughal Deccan and was known for centuries afterwards as the *dhara* of Murshid Quli Khān. His excellent system, backed by his constant vigilance and personal supervision, led to the improvement of agriculture and increase of the revenue in a few years." (Sarkar, *A Short History of Aurangzeb*, pp. 26-9.)

"Notwithstanding the unamiable character given to him in his youth, the personal conduct of Shāh Jahān seems to have been blameless when on the throne.\* His treatment of his people was beneficent and paternal, and his liberal sentiments towards those around him cannot be better shown than by the confidence which (unlike most Eastern princes) he so generously reposed in his sons." (Elphinstone, op. cit., pp. 600-603.)

This certainly does not seem an overdrawn or 'unduly favourable' picture considering the almost unanimous verdict of unbiased observers, and in the clear light of facts. "Tavernier who had repeatedly visited most parts of India, says that *Shāh Jahān 'reigned not so much as a king over his subjects, but rather as a father over his family and children'* ; and goes on to commend the strictness of his civil Government, and speaks in high terms of the security enjoyed under it. . . . Pietro Della Valle, who wrote in the last years of Jahāngīr (1623), when things were in a worse state than under his son, gives the following account :—'Hence, generally, all live much after a genteel way ; and they do it securely as well, because the King does not persecute his subjects with false accusations, nor deprive them of anything when he sees them live splendidly, and with the appearance of riches (as is often done in other Mahometan countries).'

Even Bernier, whose "gloomy impressions" are emphasised by Vincent Smith,† writes of the prosperity of Bengal under Shāh Jahān in the following terms :—

*Bengale abounds with every necessary of life, and it is this abundance that has induced so many Portuguese, Half-castes, and other Christians, driven from their different settlements by the Dutch, to seek an asylum in this fertile kingdom. The Jesuits and Augustines, who have large churches and are permitted the free and unmolested exercise of their religion, assured me that Ogouli (Hugli) alone contains from eight to nine thousand Christians, and that in other parts of the kingdom their number exceeded*

\*"The popular view that the life of a Mughal Emperor was an increasing round of pleasure, lasciviousness, sport and sensuality, is refuted by the very minute details of his (Shāh Jahān's) daily routine, which we come across in contemporary Persian histories. This routine was strictly adhered to, whether the Emperor was in camp or at the capital. And there is overwhelming evidence to prove that Shāh Jahān led a strenuous life, and divided his time evenly between government and sport." (Sak-sena, op. cit., p. 238 ; Sarkar, *Studies in Mughal India*, pp. 1-15).

† O. H. p. 418. Smith himself does not fail to acknowledge : "Whatever be the view taken of the personal character of Shāh Jahān or the efficiency of his administration, it can hardly be disputed that his reign marks the climax of the Mogul dynasty and empire."—*Ibid.*, pp. 418-19.

five-and-twenty thousand. *The rich exuberance of the Country, together with the beauty and amiable disposition of the native women, has given rise to a proverb in common use among the Portuguese, English, and Dutch, that the kingdom of Bengale has a hundred gates open for entrance, but not one for departure.*

*In regard to valuable commodities of a nature to attract foreign merchants, I am acquainted with no country where so great a variety is found. Besides the sugar, . . . there is in Bengale such quantity of cotton and silks, that the kingdom may be called the common store-house for those two kinds of Merchandise, not of Hindoustan or the Empire of the Great Mogul only, but of all the neighbouring kingdoms, and even of Europe. I have been sometimes amazed at the vast quantity of cotton cloths of every sort, fine and coarse, white and coloured, which the Hollanders alone export to different places, especially to Japan and Europe. The English, the Portuguese and the native merchants deal also in these articles to a considerable extent. The same may be said of the silks and silk stuffs of all sorts. It is not possible to conceive the quantity drawn every year from Bengale for the supply of the whole of the Mogul Empire, as far as Lahore and Cabot (Kabul), and generally of all those foreign nations to which the Cottons are sent. . . . The Dutch have sometimes seven or eight hundred natives employed in their silk factory at Kassem-Bazar where, in like manner, the English and other merchants employ a proportionate number.*

*Bengale is also the principal emporium for saltpetre. It is carried down the Ganges with great facility, and the Dutch and English send large cargoes to many parts of the Indies, and to Europe.*

*Lastly, it is from this fruitful kingdom, that the best lac, opium, wax, civet, long pepper and various drugs are obtained; and butter, which may appear to you an inconsiderable article, is in such plenty, that although it be a bulky article to export, yet it is sent by sea to numberless places. (Travels, pp. 438-40.)*

*Shāh Jahān's Justice* : Manucci has recorded that, when his patron Bellamont (who was the exiled Charles II's ambassador to the Mughal court) died, two English impostors, pretending to be Imperial officers, wanted to appropriate to themselves all the effects and belongings of that stranger in the Empire. When Shāh Jahān came to know of this, he ordered all the property to be restored to the rightful assignees of the dead envoy with the exception of an Arab horse 'which he kept for himself, giving an order to pay to the said John (Young) one thousand patacas (Rs. 2,000), the price at which it had been valued. He took nothing else but the latter which was destined for him.' This unique conduct even towards an unknown stranger in the land but illustrates the Emperor's sense of fairness and justice towards all people. Bernier has also observed that 'in Hindoustan every acre of land is

considered the property of the King, and *the spoliation of a peasant would be a robbery committed upon the King's domain.*' In the light of these statements of disinterested Europeans, Rai Bhār Mal's eulogy regarding Shāh Jahān's administration of justice is not difficult to understand : Says he,

'Notwithstanding the great area of this country, plaints were so few that only one day in the week, *viz.*, Wednesday, was fixed upon for the administration of justice ; and it was rarely even then that twenty plaintiffs could be found to prefer suits, the number generally being much less. The writer of this historical sketch on more than one occasion, when honoured with an audience of the King, heard His Majesty chide the *darogha* of the Court that although so many confidential persons had been appointed to invite plaintiffs, and a day of the week was set apart exclusively with the view of dispensing justice, yet even the small number of twenty plaintiffs could but very seldom be brought into Court ... *In short, it was owing to the great solicitude evinced by the King toward the promotion of the national weal and the general tranquillity, that the people were restrained from committing offences against one another and breaking the public peace.* But if offenders were discovered, the local authorities used generally to try them on the spot (where the offence had been committed) according to law, and in concurrence with the law officers : and if any individual, dissatisfied with the decision passed on his case, appealed to the governor or *dewan*, or to the *kazi* of the *suba*, *the matter was reviewed and judgment was awarded with great care and discrimination lest it should be mentioned in the presence of the King that justice had not been done.* If parties were not satisfied even with these decisions, they appealed to the chief *dewan*, or to the chief *kazi* on matters of law. These officers instituted further inquiries, with all this care, what cases, except those relating to blood and religion, could become subjects of reference to His Majesty.'

Moreland has indeed pointed out that *the reign of Shāh Jahān was "a period of agrarian tranquillity,"* though the condition of the peasants became worse towards the beginning of the next reign. This prosperity under Shāh Jahān was largely due to his "careful administration," which raised the income of the State beyond all precedents. The testimony of Rāi Bhār Mal, already cited in confirmation of this, is sought to be disparaged by some on the ground that the actual orders of Shāh Jahān on matters therein referred to are not traceable. Moreland is certainly not correct in describing the author of the *Lubbu-t Tawārikh* as "a later writer"; for the Rāi himself speaks of 'the writer of this historical sketch on more than one occasion,' being 'honoured with an audience of the King (Shāh



Jahān).’ His account, we repeat, unmistakably points to the efficiency, benevolence, and undoubted prosperity of Shāh Jahān’s Empire.

It is not possible here to make an accurate estimate of the extent of this prosperity. We, therefore, give below only a few of its visible indications, from which readers might draw their own conclusions :—

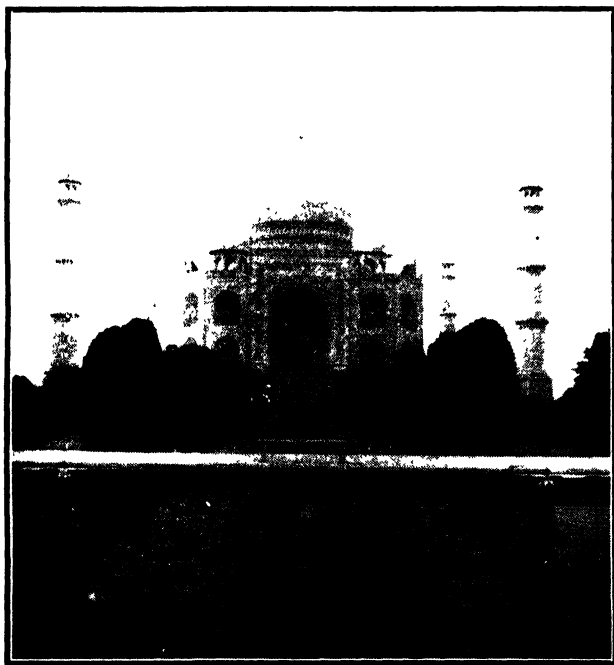
1. In 1647, Shāh Jahān sent, as a thanks-offering, a jewelled candle-stick ‘to the revered tomb of the Prophet (on whom be the greatest favours and blessings !), an account of which is here given . . . Having selected out of the amber candle-sticks that he had amongst his private property the largest of them all, which weighed 700 *tolas*, and was worth 10,000 *rupees*, he commanded that it should be covered with a net-work of gold, ornamented on all sides with flowers and studded with gems, among which that valuable diamond\* should also be included. In short, that incomparable candle-stick cost two *lacs* and 50,000 *rupees*, of which one *lac* and 50,000 was the price of the diamond, and the remaining *lac* the worth of all the gems and gold, together with the original candle-stick. Mir Saiyid Ahmad Said Bahari, who had once before conveyed charitable presents to the two sacred cities, was then deputed to take charge of this precious offering ; and an edict was promulgated to the effect, that the revenue collectors of the province of Gujarat should purchase a *lac* and 60,000 *rupees*’ worth of goods for the sacred fane, and deliver it over to him, so that he might take it along with him from thence. Out of this, he was directed to present 50,000 *rupees*’ worth to the Sheriff of Mecca ; to sell 60,000 *rupees*’ worth, and distribute the proceeds, together with any profits that might accrue, amongst the indigent of that sacred city ; and the remaining 50,000, in like manner, amongst those of the glorious Medina. The above named Saiyid, who was in receipt of only a daily stipend, was promoted to a suitable *mansab*, and having been munificently presented with a dress of honour and a donation of 12,000 *rupees*, received his dismissal.

2. ‘Notwithstanding the comparative increase in the expenses of the State during this reign, gratuities for the erection of public edifices and other works in progress, and for the paid military service and establishments, such as those maintained in Balkh, Badakhshān, and Kandahār, amounted, at one disbursement only, to fourteen *krors* of *rupees*, and the advances made on account of edifices only were two *krors* and fifty *lacs* of *rupees*. From this single instance of expenditure, an idea may be formed as to what the charges must have been under others.’

\* The diamond in question was got from Golkonda as part of its tribute, and weighed in its rough state 180 *ratīs* : ‘after His Majesty’s own lapidaries had cut away as much of the outer surface as was requisite to disclose all its beauties, there remained a rare gem of 100 *ratīs* weight, valued by the jewellers at one *lac* and 50,000 *rupees*’ (*Shāh Jahān-nāmā* of Ināyat Khān, E. & D., op. cit., VII, p. 84).



SHARMA: *Crescent in India*



“The Dream in Marble”

3. 'In the course of years many valuable gems had come into the Imperial jewel-house, each one of which might serve as an ear-drop for Venus, or would adorn the girdle of the Sun. Upon the accession of the Emperor, it occurred to his mind that, in the opinion of far-seeing men, the acquisition of such rare jewels and the keeping of such wonderful brilliants can only render one service, that of adorning the throne of empire. They ought, therefore, to be put to such a use, that beholders might share in and benefit by their splendour, and that Majesty might shine with increased brilliancy. It was accordingly ordered that, in addition to the jewels in the Imperial jewel-house, rubies, garnets, diamonds, rich pearls and emeralds, to the value of 200 *lacs* of *rupees*, should be brought for the inspection of the Emperor, and that they, with some exquisite jewels of great weight, exceeding 50,000 *miskals* in weight and fourteen *lacs* of *rupees*, having been carefully selected, should be handed over to Be-badal Khān, the superintendent of the goldsmith's department. There was also to be given to him one *lac* of *tolas* of pure gold, equal to 250,000 *miskals* in weight and fourteen *lacs* of *rupees* in value. The throne (which was ordered to be constructed) was to be three *gaz* in length, two and a half in breadth, and five in height, and was to be set with the above-mentioned jewels. The outside of the canopy was to be of enamel work with occasional gems, the inside was to be thickly set with rubies, garnets and other jewels and it was to be supported by twelve emerald columns. On the top of each pillar there were to be two peacocks thick-set with gems and between each two peacocks a tree set with rubies and diamonds, emeralds and pearls. The ascent was to consist of three steps set with jewels of fine water. This throne was completed in the course of seven years at a cost of 100 *lacs* of *rupees*.'

4. 'The following is an exact account of the founding of the splendid fort in the above-named metropolis (Shāh-jahānābad), with its edifices resembling Paradise, which was constructed in the environs of the city of Delhi, on the banks of the river Jumna . . . Active labourers were then employed in digging the foundations, and on the night of Friday, the 9th of Muharram, of the year coinciding with 1049 A.H. (1639 A.D.), the foundation stone of that noble structure was laid. Throughout the Imperial dominions, wherever artificers could be found, whether plain stone-cutters, ornamental sculptors, masons, or carpenters, by the mandate worthy of implicit obedience, they were all collected together, and multitudes of common labourers were employed in the work. It was ultimately completed on the 24 of Rabi-ul awwal, in the twenty-first year of his reign, corresponding to 1058 A.H., at an outlay of 60 *lacs* of *rupees*, after taking nine years, three months, and some days in building.'

5. The Tāj Mahāl, by common consent the most admired mausoleum in the world, enshrining the remains of Mumtāz-i Mahāl, Shāh Jahān's beloved queen, who died on Tuesday, 7th June, 1131 (17 Zi-l kada, 1040 A.H.) at Burhānpur, was built on a plot purchased from Rāja Jai Singh (grandson of Rāja Mān Singh) south of Agra city, at a cost of 9 *krors* and 17 *lacs* of *rupees*, according to the *Diwān-i-Afridi*. It was

begun early in 1632 and completed in January 1643, under the supervision of Mukarramat Khān and Mir Abdul Karim. The *Diwān-i-Afridi* also names the following artisans employed in its construction :—

“ Amānat Khān Shirāzi, writer of Tughra inscriptions, from Qandahār; Master Isā Khān, mason, a citizen of Agra; Master Pira, carpenter, a resident of Delhi; Bānuhar, Jhāt Mal and Zorāwar, sculptors from Delhi; Ismail Khān Rumi, maker of the dome and the scaffolding supporting it; and Rām Mal Kāshmiri, gardner.’ It also gives a list of twenty varieties of precious stones set in the Tāj, got from ‘ Qandahār, Ceylon, “ the upper world,” Nile, Basrah and Ormaz, Jodhpur, Kumaon, Makrans, Bamas, Yemen, Atlantic Ocean, Ghorband, Gandak, Bābā Budhan, Mount Sinai, Gwalior, Persia, and Assam.”

Father Heras, following in the wake of V. A. Smith, recently made out a case for the Italian Geronimo Veroneo, as the architect of the Tāj, on the testimony of two contemporary Jesuit Fathers, Manrique and De Castro. Veroneo was a Venetian jeweller who died at Lahore on 2nd August, 1640. Father Manrique appears to have got the information from De Castro (then Rector of the Jesuit College, Agra) who administered the last unction to Veroneo at the time of his death. His statement is as follows :—

‘ The architect of these works was a Venetian, by name Geronimo Veroneo, who had come to this part in a Portuguese ship and died in the city of Loar (Lahore) just before I reached it.

‘ The Emperor Corrombo (Khurram) paid him a very high salary. Fame, the swift conveyor of good and evil news, had spread the story that the Emperor summoned him and informed him that he desired to erect a great sumptuous tomb to his dead wife, and he was required to draw up some designs for this, for the Emperor’s inspection.

‘ The architect Veroneo carried out this order, and within a few days proved the great skill he had in this art by producing several models of the most beautiful architecture. He pleased this ruler in respect of the designs, but, in his barbaric pride and arrogance, His Majesty was displeased with him owing to his low estimates, and it is said that, becoming angry, he told Veroneo to spend 3 *crores* of *rupees*, that is Rs. 300 *lakhs*, and to inform him when it was expended. This is so large a sum as to overawe one. If however, as they used to say, the tomb had to be covered with gold plates, as had been done with the funeral urn which already held the remains of this Agarene Empress, such heavy expenditure was not surprising.’

Sleeman, in his *Rambles and Recollections*, suggests the name of another European architect, viz., the French engineer, Austin de Bourdeaux, whom he tries to identify with Ustad Isa Khān !

These views are contradicted by Sir John Marshall and E. B.

Havell on grounds of faulty historical evidence and internal proofs of style. Mr. Arthur U. Pope, more trenchantly declares : "The myth that the Tāj Mahāl was built by an Italian now belongs to the realm of bed-time stories."

6. An idea of the wealth accumulated by the nobility may be had from the following account of Asaf Khān's property at the time of his death in 1641 A.D. It is, of course, not to be forgotten that Asaf Khān held a unique position in the Empire, by virtue of his relationship with the Emperor. The *Bādshāh-nāmā* states :

'He had risen to a rank and dignity which no servant of the state had ever before attained. By the munificent favour of the Emperor, his *mansab* was nine thousand personal and nine thousand horse, *do-aspah* and *sih-aspah*, the pay of which amounted to sixteen *krors* and twenty *lacs* of *dāms*. When these had all received their pay, a sum of fifty *lacs* of *rupees* was left for himself... Besides the mansion which he had built in Lahore, and on which he expended twenty *lacs* of *rupees*, he left money and valuables to the amount of two *krors* and fifty *lacs* of *rupees*. There were 30 *lacs* of *rupees* in jewels, three *lacs* of *ashrafis* equal to 42 *lacs* of *rupees*, one *kror* and 25 *lacs* in *rupees*, 30 *lacs* in gold and silver utensils, and 23 *lacs* in miscellaneous articles.'

This vast wealth, though to all appearances concentrated in the hands of the Emperor and the nobility, and spent in war and luxury, could not have been extorted from an indigent peasantry. The only revolts under Shāh Jahān were not reactions to the alleged oppression of the rulers, whether central or local, but the expression of the normal ambitions of medieval nobility. The only exception to this was the intransigent conduct of the Portuguese at Hugli, whose oppressions and exactions drew upon themselves the might of Imperial arms.

Manucci has more than once observed how he sought fortune and security within the *Empire*, while he met with chicanery and risk to life in the European settlements. In one place he remarks, 'Joas Antunes Portugal was incensed at this affair (a just award of money due to Manucci, by an impartial tribunal), and, in place of being sorry, sought means to take my life. If he did not succeed, it was because I did not remain in Goa, but returned to the Mogul Prince's service.' 'The fellows,' he writes about the Portuguese, 'glory in cheating foreigners without scruple.' He found less personal liberty, to do even humanitarian work for the poor and indigent, in Portuguese than in Mughal India.

Conditions, no doubt, were more unsettled in medieval times than now all the world over, and robberies on roads were not infrequent. But Shāh Jahān did all in his power to render travelling

within the Empire as safe as could be. One of the means he adopted was to provide caravansarais with proper equipments.

'For the use of wayfarers,' writes Manucci, 'there are throughout the realms of the Mogul on every route many *sarais*. They are like fortified places with their bastions and strong gates; most of them are built of stone or of brick. In every one is an official whose duty it is to close the gates at the going down of the sun. After he has shut the gates he calls out that everyone must look after his belongings, picket his horses by their fore and hind legs, above all that he must look out for dogs, for the dogs of Hindustan are very cunning and great thieves !

'At 6 o'clock in the morning, before opening the gates, the watchman gives three warnings to the travellers, crying in a loud voice that everyone must look after his own things. After these warnings, if any one suspects that any of his property is missing, the doors are not opened until the lost thing is found. By this means they make sure of having the thief, and he is strung up opposite the *sarai*. Thus the thieves when they hear a complaint made drop the goods somewhere, so as not to be discovered.

'These *sarais* are only intended for travellers (*soldiers do not go into them*). Each one of them might hold, more or less, from 800 to 1,000 persons with their horses, camels, carriages, and some of them are even larger. They contain different rooms, halls, verandahs, with trees inside the courtyard, and many provision shops, also separate abode for the women and men who arrange the rooms and the beds for the travellers.'

*Famine Relief* : The measures taken by Shāh Jahān for the relief of the famine-stricken in the earlier part of his reign, when his treasury was not so full as later, are worthy of note. Writes Lahori :

'The Emperor, in his gracious kindness and bounty, directed the officials of Burhānpur, Ahmedābad, and the country of Surat, to establish soup kitchens, or alms-houses, such as are called *langar* in the language of Hindustan, for the benefit of the poor and destitute. Every day sufficient soup and bread was prepared to satisfy the wants of the hungry. It was further ordered that, so long as His Majesty remained at Burhānpur, 5,000 *rupees* should be distributed among the deserving poor every Monday, that day being distinguished above all others as the day of the Emperor's accession to the throne. Thus, on twenty Mondays one *lac* of *rupees* was given away in charity. Ahmedābad had suffered more than any other place, and so His Majesty ordered the officials to distribute 50,000 *rupees* among the famine stricken people. Want of rain and dearth of grain had caused distress in many other countries (districts). So, under the directions of the wise and generous Emperor, *taxes* amounting to nearly 70 *lacs* of *rupees* were remitted by the revenue officers—a sum amounting to nearly eight *krors* of *dāms* and amounting to one-eleventh part of the whole revenue. When such remissions were made from the exchequer, it

may be conceived how great were the reductions made by the nobles who held *jagirs* and *mansabs*.'

Similar measures were adopted for relief of distressed peasantry in Kashmir (1641) and the Punjab (1646) when there was famine on account of heavy rainfall. On the former occasion 50,000 people appealed to Shāh Jahān for relief and he distributed among them Rs. 100,000, besides the provision of Rs. 200 worth of cooked food daily; and at the same time sent Rs. 30,000 to Tarbiyat Khān for further relief measures, and ordered the opening of five kitchens for the distribution of soup and bread in Kashmir. This officer having failed to manage the situation well, he was replaced by Zafar Khān, who was given a further grant of Rs. 20,000. In the Punjab, likewise, ten kitchens were opened and Saiyid Jalāl was commissioned to distribute Rs. 10,000 among the poor and destitute. "Sold children were ransomed by the Government, and restored to their parents. In February 1647 Shāh Jahān sanctioned another thirty thousand rupees for relief measures in the Punjab."

In the face of this, Vincent Smith declares, while the people were dying of starvation "the camp of Shāh Jahān at Burhānpur was filled with provisions of all kinds," and "so far as Mundy saw, *nothing* to help the suffering people was done by the Government." With regard to the remission of taxes, above referred to, Smith dismisses them with the frivolous observation that "*The facts do not justify the historian's praise of the 'gracious kindness and bounty' of Shāh Jahān. The remission of one-eleventh of the land revenue implies that attempts were made to collect ten-elevenths, a burden which could not be borne by a country reduced to 'the dire extremity,' and retaining no trace of productiveness.*"

At least two instances of the construction of canals to improve agricultural prosperity are on record. The *Bādshāh-nāmā* states :

(1) 'Ali Mardān Khān represented to His Majesty that one of his followers was an adept in the forming of canals, and would undertake to construct a canal from the palace where the river Rāvi descends from the hills into the plains, and to conduct the waters to Lahore, benefiting the cultivation of the country through which it should pass. The Emperor . . . gave to the Khān one *lac* of *rupees*, a sum of which experts estimated the expense, and the Khān then entrusted its formation to one of his trusted servants.' The canal even to this day bears witness. (2) 'The canal that Sultan Firoz Shāh Khilji, during the time he reigned at Delhi, had made to branch off from the river Jumna, in the vicinity of *pargana* Khizrābad, whence he brought it in a channel 30 Imperial *kos* long to



the confines of *pargana* Safidun, which was his hunting-seat, and had only a scanty supply of water, had after the Sultan's death, become in the course of time ruinous. While Shahabu-d dīn Ahmad Khān held the Government of Delhi, during the reign of Emperor Akbar, he put it in repair and set it flowing again, with a view to fertilize the places in his *jagir*, and hence it was called Nahr-i-Shāh ; but for want of repairs, however, it again stopped flowing. At the time when the sublime attention was turned to the building of this fort and place (of Shāhjahānābad), it was commanded that the aforesaid canal from Khizrābad to Safidun should be repaired, and a new channel excavated from the latter spot to the regal residence, which also is a distance of 30 Imperial *kos*. After it was thus prolonged, it was designated the Nahr-i Bihist.'

A further illustration of Shāh Jahān's benevolent intentions towards the peasantry is afforded by the same writer in the following statement :—

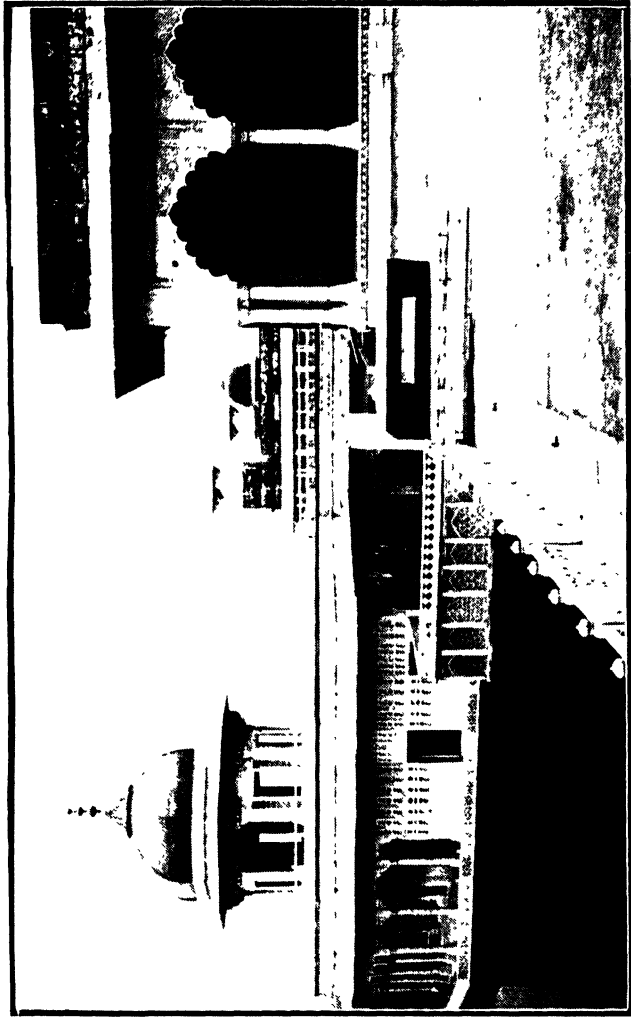
'As it was represented that during the progress of the victorious forces towards Kandahār (in 1649 A.D.) a great deal of the cultivation of Ghazni and its dependencies had been trodden under foot by the army, the merciful monarch, the *cherisher of his people*, despatched the sum of 2,000 gold *ashrafis*, in charge of a trusty individual, with directions to *inquire into the loss sustained by the agriculturists, and to distribute it among them accordingly.*'

*Art under Shāh Jahān* : This account of the Golden Age of the Mughal Empire cannot be closed without at least a brief reference to the cultivation of fine arts. The construction of the Peacock throne and the building of the Tāj Mahāl, both of which took years to execute and gave employment to the finest workmen from all parts of the country, are but the best known of numerous works of art produced in this epoch. We have not the space to dwell at length on all phases of the cultural life under Shāh Jahān ; but as Dr. Saksena, in his excellent study of the subject, has truly observed, "The prevailing peace in the country together with the personal interest of the sovereign gave a powerful impetus to the growth of art and literature. Poets, philosophers, scholars, artisans, all flocked to Court in search of patronage, and talent was but rarely disappointed. The King was never slow to recognise merit and rewarded it generously. His example was followed by his courtiers, who vied with one another in extending their patronage to really capable men."

The *Moti Masjid* or Pearl Mosque was built at Agra in seven years (1645-53) at a cost of Rs. 300,000. In the words of St. Nihal Singh, it was "designed by a craftsman who possessed the skill to



SHARMA : *Crescent in India*



Saman Buri, Agra.

make stone suggest the struggle of the soul to soar above mundane entanglements. Built on a high plateau, with a spacious court of white marble, surrounded by a gallery and column made of the same stone, its white delicately shaped domes rise above the red, solid-looking ramparts, powerfully conveying that idea." Another writer has described it as 'a poem of fervent stone,' and observes : 'There is something more intense in the mystic impression of those denticulated arches, those white and blue perspectives, than in the flight of the Gothic perpendiculars. . . . The serenity of the Greek temple has not that passion petrified in beauty. . . . The sanctuary is alive, a mysterious soul throbs there between bliss and ecstasy.'

The *Tāj Mahāl*, details of the construction of which have already been given, seen from the *Saman Burj* or Jasmine Tower in Agra Fort (whence Shāh Jahān gazed at it for the last time from his prison window), reveals 'the pearly marble set off against the green foliage of the garden and the deep blue of the Indian sky, a sight the charm of which is never forgotten by any one who has had the good fortune to behold it.'

"Perhaps the most entrancing view is to be had on a tranquil night, when the full moon floats overhead lighting up the tomb with an ethereal glow, and the mausoleum is mirrored in the calm surface of the Jumna. The closer one examines the *Tāj Mahāl* the more one admires it. The minutest detail has been carefully thought out and executed with tireless patience. In inscribing texts from the *Quran* round the tall doorways the artists have shown themselves such masters of perspective that the letters thirty feet or more above the line of the eye appear to be exactly the same size as those a foot from the ground. The mosaic work is done with onyx, jasper, cornelian, carbuncle, malachite, lapis lazuli, and other precious stones."

The *Tāj* still attracts tourists from all over the world and is perhaps the most admired mausoleum ever built by man. Human expression fails to convey in words the delicate message of its exquisite beauty : It has nevertheless been described as 'A Dream in Marble,' as 'a summing up of many forms of beauty.' "It matters not," writes Mr. Gladstone Solomon, "that it was the autocrat Shāh Jahān who made the *Tāj*. From the moment of the first inception of its idea in the beauty-haunted mind of the Grand Mogul, the *Tāj* became the property of the world. . . . Shāh Jahān, the Oriental despot, was in this a greater Socialist than the most radical of our reformers. He believed in the community of Art. . . . so that the unending message of the *Tāj* is still being unfolded."

Shāh Jahān's patronage was not confined to architecture alone, though one writer has observed : " Even if the entire mass of historical literature had perished, and only these buildings had remained to tell the story of Shāh Jahān's reign, there is little doubt that it would have still been pronounced as the most magnificent in history." Both Persian and Hindi, prose and poetry, music, painting and dance, astronomy, mathematics, and medicine, all flourished equally. There were both Hindu and Muslim writers, scholars, and artists. Translations of great Sanskrit works were also made. Besides those attributed to Dārā Shukoh may be mentioned the rendering into Persian of the *Prabodh Chandrodaya* by Munshi Banvali Dās and the *Rāmāyaṇa* by Ibn Har Karan. Mulla Farid Munajjim, the greatest astronomer of the period, prepared the astral chart entitled *Zic-i-Shāh Jahānī*, Ataullah wrote a treatise on Algebra, Mensuration and Arithmetic, and dedicated it to the Emperor and Dārā, while Abdur Rashid translated *Bij Ganit* from Sanskrit.

The period of Shāh Jahān's reign, writes Dr. Sakseña, partially coincided with what is described as the most brilliant epoch in the development of Hindi literature and language. The Emperor could hardly remain aloof from its influence. He spoke Hindi, was fond of Hindi music, and patronised Hindi poets. The Hindi poets who were then connected with the court were Sundar Dās, Chintāmaṇi, and Kavindrā Āchārya. Shāh Jahān delighted in Tān Sen's son-in-law, Lāl Khān, *Guṇa Samudra*, singing the *drupad* tune, which was the Emperor's favourite. Jagannāth, the best Hindu musician of the age, was exceedingly favoured by Shāh Jahān, and received from him the title *Mahā Kavi Rai*. Sukh Sen was a master-player on the *rubab* or guitar, and Sūr Sen on the *bīn* or zither.

### *Shāh Jahān a Paradox :*

In spite of all that has been said above, however, Shāh Jahān still remains a paradox in some respects. The minute details of his daily routine, of which we have contemporary evidence, show him to have been a man of strenuous activity and great self-command ; but legend whispers many a tale of extreme self-indulgence verging on scandalous depravity for which, however, there seems to be little foundation. His sense of fairness and justice was great ; yet, at times he was guilty of excessive cruelty, though this was a common frailty of the age. He entertained many Hindus in this Court and ser-

vice, and was ordinarily tolerant towards Christians, as mentioned by Bernier ; nevertheless, at times he gave way to acts of intolerance, though sometimes not without provocation, as in the case of the Portuguese. But his destruction of Hindu temples is less intelligible. Says the author of the *Bādshāh-nāmā* :

‘ It has been brought to the notice of His Majesty that during the late reign many idol temples had been begun, but remained unfinished, at Benares, the great strongfold of infidelity. The infidels were now desirous of completing them. His Majesty, the defender of the faith, gave orders that at Benares, and throughout all his dominions in every place, all temples that had been begun should be cast down. It was now reported from the province of Allahābad that seventy-six temples had been destroyed in the district of Benares.’

This was in 1633. It is further related that “Hindus were forbidden to dress in the Muslim style, to sell or drink wine openly or privately, to cremate their dead or burn the *satis* near Muslim grave yards, and to purchase Muslim slaves of war.” These other acts of petty persecution indicate that there was already a set-back in the tide of liberalism so well begun by Akbar. Yet, Della Valle refers to the prohibition of cow-slaughter in Cambay, and Manrique to strict injunctions against slaying of animals in Hindu districts. Dryden’s lines best sum the sunset of this glorious career :

Oh ! had he still that character maintained,  
Of valour, which in blooming Youth he gain’d,  
He promised in his East a glorious Race ;  
Now sunk from his Meridian, sets a pace.  
But in the Sun, whom he from Noon declines,  
And with abated heat less fiercely shines,  
Seems to grow milder as he goes away.  
Pleasing himself with the remains of Day :  
So he who, in his Youth, for Glory strove,  
Would recompense his age with Ease and Love.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A D.

- 1628 Accession of Shāh Jahān.
- 1629 Khān Jahān’s rebellion. *Firmān* to the English at Surat authorising them to wage war on the Portuguese in Mughal dominions.
- 1630 Famine and pestilence in the Deccan.
- 1631-2 Extirpation of the Portuguese pirates at Hugli. Death of Mumtāz Begam at Burhānpur. A great famine in Gujarat. Destruction of Hindu temples. Annexation of Ahmednagar.
- 1633 Daulatābad invested ; surrender of Fath Khān.

- 1634 Bundela rebellion under Jajar Singh. Peacock throne constructed in seven years at a cost of one crore of rupees. English permitted to trade in Bengal.
- 1635 Successful war against Ahmednagar and Golkonda ; failure to reduce Bijapur. Todar Mal's revenue system introduced in the Deccan.
- 1636-44 Aurangzeb's first viceroyalty in the Deccan.
- 1638 Kandahār surrendered to the Mughals by Ali Mardān Khān. Guru Hargovind succeeded by Har Rai.
- 1639 Rāja of Chandragiri permits Francis Day to build a fort at Madras (Chennapatnam).
- 1645 Boughton, the English surgeon, treats Jahānara at Agra : rewarded with trade concessions. Tāj Mahāl completed.
- 1646 Shivāji captures Torṇa. Prince Murād sent to Balkh to attempt its conquest.
- 1647 Aurangzeb sent to Balkh and Badakhshān.
- 1648-9 Shāh Abbas II of Persia recaptures Kandahār. Aurangzeb fails to take it back. Manucci at Agra. Execution of Charles I in England.
- 1651 English factory established at Hugli.
- 1652 Aurangzeb's second effort at Kandahār also fails.
- 1653 Dārā Shukoh sent against Kandahār. Aurangzeb's second viceroyalty in the Deccan.
- 1655 Job Charnock in Bengal.
- 1656 Aurangzeb's siege of Golkanda. The Dutch establish factory at Chinsura. The Koh-i-nur diamond presented by Mir Jumla to Shāh Jahān (?).
- 1657 Aurangzeb prosecutes war with Bijapur. War of Succession ends in Aurangzeb's triumph.
- 1657 Imprisonment of Shāh Jahān and accession of Aurangzeb.

## CHAPTER XVI

### POST MERIDIEM OF THE EMPIRE

It is indeed difficult to say how much longer the sun continues to shine the brightest after he has reached the zenith ; but it is common experience that the mid-day glow continues for quite a long time before one is aware that afternoon has come, and sunset must follow soon. So it was with the Mughal Empire at the end of Shāh Jahān's reign : The Golden Age was not yet quite past, but the long rule of Aurangzeb (1657-1707) saw it tarnish ; and the death of the last of the Great Mughals began to show the iron at its core. Indeed, to vary the metaphor, the gilded tomb did worms infold ; and all that had glistened was not gold. The fifty years of Aurangzeb's Imperial sway saw what one recent writer has aptly described as "the turn of the tide."

Aurangzeb as Prince had shown great promise, both as an administrator and as a general. On the throne he sat for quite as long a period as his great-grandfather Akbar. The half-century of rule in each case was full of incessant activity ; and of the two, Aurangzeb had certainly the better start in life. Akbar was a mere child when he succeeded to his father's precarious legacy ; his resources were scanty, his troubles great and many. Not so with Aurangzeb ; his age was forty at the time of his accession. His dominion was sure, his wealth great, and his army better equipped and larger. Internally the Empire was at peace, and the machinery of Government at work for over three generations. Still did Aurangzeb fail. The key to this failure is his character. Once more we find the oft-repeated experience : the fortunes of the Empire turning on the pivot of the Emperor's personality. Aurangzeb was as fanatical as Akbar was liberal ; but both were equally zealous in the pursuit of their respective ideals. Aurangzeb aimed at and fatally succeeded in undoing the great work of Akbar. In the present reign we but witness the untwisting of the chord of national life.

Aurangzeb has been described by some writers as a 'political paradox.' The unravelling of this enigma, however, requires a clear



knowledge of the events of his reign. These, in our opinion, are better studied in a *logical* rather than a merely *chronological* order. The present chapter is therefore arranged as follows :—

I. Early Career ; II. Frontier Wars ; III. North India ; IV. South India ; V. The Europeans ; and VI. The Riddle of Aurangzeb.

#### *Aurangzeb's Early Career :*

According to Khāfi Khān, 'Aurangzeb was born in the year 1028 A. H. (1619 A.D.) at Dhūd, which is on the frontiers of the *Suba* of Ahmedābad and Mālwa, whilst his father was *Subadār* of the Dakhin.' Sir J. N. Sarkar gives the date more accurately as "the night of 15th Zi'qada, 1027 A.H. (24th October, 1618 A.D., Old Style)." Muhiu-d dīn Muhammad Aurangzeb was the sixth among fourteen children of Shāh Jahān and Mumtāz Mahāl. He first sat on his father's throne on 1st Zi'qada, 1068 A. H. (21 July 1658 A.D.) ; but his formal coronation took place on 24th Ramzān, 1069 (5 June 1659), under the high-sounding title : Abdul Muzāffar Muhiu-d dīn Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahādur 'Alamgīr Pādshāh-i Ghāzi.' *Alamgīr* or 'world-compeller,' the title by which he was more familiarly known, appears to have been suggested by the Persian inscription on a sword presented to Aurangzeb by Shāh Jahān. It sums up correctly the spirit of the Emperor and forms the key-note of his ambition and rule.

In June 1626, at the age of eight, Aurangzeb was sent to Lahore, together with Dārā, as a hostage to Jahāngīr during Shāh Jahān's rebellion. He obtained his release only on the death of Jahāngīr and the accession of Shāh Jahān, in February 1628. With this year began his regular education, chiefly among others under Mir Muhammad Hashim of Gilam. He soon familiarised himself with the *Koran* and the *Hādīs*, and became an adept at the writing of the *naskha* hand. 'His *nastaliq* and *shikasta* styles of writing were also excellent.' Though he had a dislike for poetry, the didactic variety was not neglected by him. His aversion to music, painting, and the fine arts has been made memorable in the familiar anecdote of the funeral of music : the mourners in the cortège being asked by Aurangzeb to bury her (the Muse) deep lest she should rise again ! These puritanical traits of the Emperor had their beginning in the early life and training of the young Prince.

Another incident of Aurangzeb's boyhood also indicated the pro-

mise of the cool courage and philosophical bent which were so characteristic of his manhood. In May 1633 the Prince was watching an elephant fight when one of the infuriated animals rushed at him. But the dauntless stripling of less than fifteen summers never budged an inch. On the contrary he wounded the elephant with his spear and evoked the admiration of all present. When Shāh Jahān chid him for his rashness, he only remarked : " If the fight had ended fatally for me it would not have been a matter of shame. *Death drops the curtain even on the Emperors ; it is no dishonour !* "

On 13 December, 1634, Aurangzeb first set his foot on the official ladder, when he was made commander of Ten Thousand Horse. Next September he was sent to suppress the Bundela rebellion, at the head of three armies. The issue of that expedition again typified the character of the supreme commander : the survivors of *johār* were dragged to the Mughal *harem* ; two sons and one grandson of Jajhar were converted to Islam ; another son and minister of the Rāja, having refused to apostatise, were executed in cold blood. " The lofty temple of Bīr Singh at Urchha was demolished and a mosque was erected on its site. The fort of Jhānsi was taken (end of October) and the spoils of war, including the buried treasure of Bīr Singh, amounted to one *kror* of Rupees."

The next step of Aurangzeb was nothing short of the viceroyalty of the Deccan to which he was appointed in 1636. The city of Aurangābad, which was named after him, was made the viceregal capital. The conquest of Udgir, Ausa, Baglana, etc., and the subjugation of the intrepid Maratha general Shāhji and Kheloji Bhonsle were effected during this period, 1636-44. In this last year (1644) Aurangzeb was called to Agra by the illness of his sister Jahānara. Within three weeks of this he was deprived of his southern viceroyalty, rank and emoluments, it is said, owing to Dārā's persistent hostility towards him. However, by the intercession of Jahānara he was appointed viceroy of Gujarat, 16 February, 1645. From there he was nominated to the command of the Balkh expedition in 1647. Within the short period of two years in Gujarat, Aurangzeb had shown sufficient administrative capacity and firmness.

Though Balkh had to be restored to Nāzīr Muhammad, it was during this campaign that Aurangzeb distinguished himself by his cool and steadfast faith, kneeling for prayer in the midst of the raging battle. The enemy in generous admiration stopped fighting and ex-

claimed : " To fight with such a man is to court one's own ruin." Nevertheless, ' the war cost the Indian treasury four *krors* of rupees, while not an inch of territory was gained as the result of it.'

From March 1648 to July 1652 Aurangzeb was Governor of Multan and Sind, during which period also he was called upon to besiege Kandahār twice (1649 and 1652), with no better success, however, than in Balkh. But the failure was due to no fault of the commander. The building of a new port in place of the silted Thatta was a sample of Aurangzeb's peaceful activities.

Aurangzeb was again sent to the Deccan in 1652. Spending nine months, which are unique in the puritan's life, at Burhānpur, he reached Aurangābad in November, 1653. The province had not prospered during his absences since 1644. A succession of incompetent viceroys had worked its ruin. Now, thanks to the efforts of Aurangzeb and his revenue minister, Murshid Kuli Khān, the province more than recovered its lost prosperity. The efficiency of both the administration and the army was improved by the dismissal of incompetent men, the inspection and supply of requisite stores and munitions, and the enforcement of proper training, etc. At the same time an annual saving of Rs. 50,000 was also effected. The conquest of Golkonda was pushed on until Shāh Jahān ordered capitulation and retreat (April 1656). The services of the capable Mir Jumla were enlisted for the Empire by creating him Prime Minister on the death of Sadullah Khān. Next year (1657) Bijapur was similarly invested. But the agents of Bijapur were busy at the Imperial capital. So at the moment of Aurangzeb's success, Shāh Jahān accepted the terms of Adil Shāh : Bidar, Kalyāni, and Parenda were to be ceded together with the payment of a war indemnity of one *kror* of rupees.

Thus both Golkonda and Bijapur were saved from complete annexation owing to Shāh Jahān's hasty overtures over the head of the Deccan Viceroy. To make matters worse, his illness in September 1657 plunged the Empire in civil war.

Dārā Shukoh, the heir presumptive, had been his father's favourite all these years. It was owing to his influence over Shāh Jahān that Aurangzeb had been rather badly treated ; at least, so the latter believed. His religious proclivities only alarmed Aurangzeb, who was cherishing dreams of becoming the Defender of the Faith. His frequent transfers, disparagement, and interference by his father, irritated Aurangzeb beyond all patience. His suspicious nature more

and more pointed to his eldest brother as the source of all mischief, present and potential. The censorship established by Dārā over all news from the Capital, during Shāh Jahān's illness, made matters worse. Rumours of all kinds escaped through the gagged silence. The jealous brothers only saw in this Dārā's sinister motives : to usurp the throne, to imprison, or possibly murder the Emperor ! What then of the fate of his distant brothers ? What above all, Aurangzeb must have thought, of the fate of Islam in India ?

Murād set the example by proclaiming himself Emperor, in Gujarat, (5 December). He was all haste and fire. But Aurangzeb was caution itself. They concerted many plans together, and finally by the beginning of 1658 set their armies in motion. Meanwhile Aurangzeb's diplomacy had already begun to work. Before he quitted the Deccan he took due precautions to pacify both Golkonda and Bijapur. He urged, no doubt, Kutb Shāh to pay up his arrears of indemnity, but at the same time he ordered the Mughal envoy at Golkonda to do nothing that might jeopardise Mughal interests. To Adil Shāh he offered a bait to keep Bijapur friendly :

'Remain loyal and keep your promises,' he wrote. 'I agree that (1) the fort of Parenda and its dependent territory, the Konkan, and the *mahāl* of Wāngi, which have been annexed to the Empire, together with that portion of the Karnātak which had been granted to the late Adil Shāh, should be left to you as before ; and (2) out of your promised indemnity of one *kror* of Rupees, thirty *lakhs* are remitted. Protect this country ; improve its administration. Expel Shiva who has sneaked into the possession of some forts of the land. Do you send me at least 10,000 cavalry. I shall grant you all the territory up to the bank of the Banganga.'

Aurangzeb was also actively intriguing, though with utmost secrecy, to enlist the grandees of the Empire on his side ; they on their side knew how to secure their own interests, for it was well known that Aurangzeb was by far the most experienced and capable among the brothers. How Aurangzeb triumphed in the War of Succession that thus started has already been told in some detail. Nor need the sorrowful tale of the fate of the defeated brothers be repeated here again. Success proclaimed Aurangzeb's diplomatic and military ability.

Birth-right's a vulgar road to kingly sway ;  
'Tis every dull-got elder brother's way.  
Dropt from above he lights into a throne ;  
Grows a piece with that he sits upon ;  
Heaven's choice, a low, inglorious, rightful drone.  
But who by force a sceptre does obtain,

Shows he can govern that, which he could gain.  
 Right comes of course, whate'er he was before ;  
 Murder and usurpation are no more.

### *Frontier Wars :*

The principal wars of Aurangzeb's reign were waged to suppress the Hindu reaction to his oppressive religious policy. Apart from these there were also the political wars of conquest directed towards extension of territory. The frontier wars, in the north-east and the north-west, were more or less of a punitive character.

*Assam :* Ever since the peace of 1639 there had been no trouble in the north-east of the Empire. But the inefficiency of Shujā's Bengal administration and the opportunity afforded by the Succession War encouraged the Ahoms to reassert their independence. In 1657 Prem Nārāyan, the ruler of Kutch Bihar, sent an army into Mughal territory, ostensibly in pursuit of a recalcitrant vassal. Next year Gauhati, the capital of Kāmrūp, was plundered and occupied by the Assamese. But not until the end of the Civil War, in 1660, could the Mughals do anything to retrieve their position in this quarter. In that year Mir Jumla, the redoubtable lieutenant of Aurangzeb, was appointed Governor of Bengal, and ordered to 'punish lawless zamindars' of the province, especially those of Assam and Māgh (Arrakan).

On 1st November, 1661, Mir Jumla started on his great campaign from Dacca. His army consisted of 12,000 horse and 30,000 foot, besides a flotilla of over 300 war-vessels. In six days' time the capital of Kutch Bihar was taken and rechristened Alamgīrnagar ; a mosque was built over its demolished temple, and the entire kingdom was annexed. Other victories soon followed : the enemy's fleet of 300 vessels was seized, and Jayadhvaj, Rāja of Garhgaon, was expelled. The spoils taken were enormous :—" 82 elephants, 3 lakhs of rupees in cash, 675 pieces of artillery, 1345 camel-swivels, 1200 *Ramchangis*, 6750 matchlocks, 340 maunds of gun-powder, a thousand and odd boats, and 173 store-houses of paddy, each containing from 10 to 1,000 maunds of grain." But the outbreak of an epidemic of fever and flux, in August, carried away vast numbers of both the people and the army. In one Mughal corps alone, out of 1,500 troopers under Dilir Khān, only 450 were left. In the whole of Assam no less than 230,000 people succumbed to the catastrophe, in a single year. "In the Mughal camp no suitable diet or comfort was available for the sick ; all had to live on coarse rice ; no wheat, no pulse, no *ghee*, no sugar, and no opium or tobacco except a little at fabulous prices. A pipe of tobacco sold at Rs. 3, a *tola* of opium at a gold-mohar, a seer of *mung-dal* at Rs. 10, and salt also at same rate as the last. The Hindustani and

Turki soldiers languished for want of wheaten bread ; the horses perished from eating rice.'

Through all these trials and sufferings Mir Jumla retained his equanimity and lived and ate like any common soldier. When the rains ceased, he resumed the offensive, but he was not destined to complete this conquest. He was seized with pleurisy and fever which soon became very serious. So a treaty was signed with the Ahom king, through the mediation of Dilir Khān, in December 1662. According to Khāfi Khān, the Rāja 'agreed to pay 120,000 *tolas* of silver, and 2,000 *tolas* of gold, and to present fifty elephants and *one of his ugly daughters to the Emperor*. He also agreed to present fifteen elephants and another daughter to Khān-khānan, together with some cash and goods. It was further agreed that of the conquered places a few forts and towns in cultivated districts near the frontier of Bengal should be attached to the Imperial dominions.' Mir Jumla died at Khizrpur, on the frontiers of Kuchbihar (31 March, 1633).

"No other general of that age," observes Sarkar in his well-merited encomium, "conducted war with so much humanity and justice, nor kept his soldiers, privates and captains alike, under such discipline ; no other general could have retained to the last the confidence and even affection of his subordinates amidst such appalling sufferings and dangers. The owner of 20 maunds of diamonds, viceroy of the rich province of Bengal, he shared with the meanest soldier the privations of the march and brought premature death on himself by scorning delights and living laborious days. He issued strict orders forbidding plunder, rape and oppression of the people, and saw to it that his orders were obeyed. The stern punishment which he meted out to the first few offenders had a salutary effect. We realize Mir Jumla's peculiar excellence more clearly by contrast with others. With a hero like Mir Jumla, the rhetoric of the historian Talish ceases to be extravagance ; his eulogy of the general is not fulsome flattery but homage deservedly paid to a born king of men." Speaking of his campaign, Prof. Bhattacharya writes : "It was the most daring and audacious piece of imperialistic venture, almost unparalleled in the annals of Mughal India, and has not probably been surpassed even in modern times."

Despite these glorious exploits, however, the Mughals lost much at the close of the next four years. Under the ambitious Chakradhwaj, who ascended the throne in November 1633, the Ahoms reconquered their possessions. Gauhati fell in November 1667 ; and all the efforts of the Mughals to recover it proved vain. Then the Ahoms fell on evil days, Kāmrūp having become prey to civil war. During the eleven years, 1670-81, seven kings sat on its throne, and

not one of them died a natural death. The Mughals profited by this, and "took advantage of it to extend their sway over southern and eastern portions of the kingdom, conquering much of the present districts of Rangpur and Western Kāmrūp, and forcing the Rāja in 1711 to confirm these gains by treaty.'

*The Afghans* : The Pathāns of the north-western frontier have ever been a perpetual source of irritation to all Indian governments. They have always been independent, but hardly ever united. This dubious heritage of theirs has been our advantage as well as disadvantage. Like monsoon clouds, sometimes they have gathered thick and poured into the plains of the Punjab ; but soon they have found themselves scattered by the strong winds of inter-tribal jealousy. A strong government at Delhi has always acted on them as the blaze of the summer sun.

1. The beginning of 1667 was one such season of storm and stress. The Yusufzais under a great leader named Bhagu had assumed kingship and crossed the river Indus, above Attok, with a force of 5,000 clansmen, blessed by Mullah Chalak, a man of saintly reputation. They were soon followed by other bands of marauders who spread over Peshāwar and Attok districts like swarms of pestilential locusts. But the Emperor took strong measures, and by October 1667 they melted away with heavy losses. Muhammad Amin Khān, son of Mir Jumla, succeeded in quieting the frontier for a period of five years.

2. The next turn was that of the Afridis. In 1672 they rose under their tribal chief Acmal Khān, "a born general, who crowned himself king, struck coins in his own name, and proclaiming war against the Mughals, summoned all the Pathan clans to join the national movement and closed the Khaibar Pass." Muhammad Amin Khān who was still in charge of Afghanistan, intoxicated with past success, failed to apprehend the force of the present rising. The result was the oft repeated tale of disaster. "Ten thousand men fell under the enemy's sword in the field, and above two *krores* of Rupees in cash and kind was looted by the enemy. They captured twenty thousand men and women and sent them to Central Asia for sale." Even the family of M. Amin Khān was captured and had to be ransomed at a very heavy price. This victory fired the imagination of the tribesmen who now began to flock round the standard of Acmal Khān. The poet chieftain of the Khataks, Khush-hal Khān, also

joined the rebels, inspiring them 'with his pen no less than his sword.'

"The danger to the empire was very great : the rising was a national one, affecting the whole Pathān land 'from Kandahār to Attok,' and its leaders were also men who had served in the Mughal army in Hindustan and the Deccan, and knew the organisation, efficiently and tactics of the imperialists." But Aurangzeb was not the man to be cowed or baffled by such a danger. M. Amin Khān was at once replaced by the more experienced Mahābat Khān. In the middle of November, 1673, Suja'at Khān and Rāja Jaswant Singh were also sent with reinforcements. Though the want of co-operation among these generals led to another disaster in 1674, Mughal prestige was soon vindicated. Aurangzeb himself proceeded to Hasan Abdāl (between Rāwal Pindi and Peshāwar,) in June 1674, and for a year and a half personally directed the operations. After much fighting, with reverses intermixed with victories, the Imperial forces finally emerged triumphant.

The result was as much due to diplomacy and intrigue, as to force and military tactics. "Many clans were won over by the grant of presents, pensions, *jagirs*, and posts in the Mughal army to their headmen." With the appointment of Amir Khān, in March 1677, as Viceroy at Kabul, a period of peace and prosperity followed. This able officer was a son-in-law of Ali Mardān Khān, and was ably assisted in his administration by his wife, Shahibi, who was a woman of great energy, tact, and wise counsel. Aurangzeb's policy of 'breaking two bones by knocking them together' (i.e., setting clan against clan and breaking both) was continued. The financial success of Amir Khān's régime is indicated by a despatch of his to Aurangzeb, dated 25 October, 1681, wherein he states, 'Six *lakhs* of Rupees were allotted by Government to be paid to the Afghans for guarding the roads. I have spent one and half *lakhs* and saved the remainder to the state.'

Still the Khataks continued to fight, and made the employment of Afghans against the Rajputs impossible ; on the contrary they diverted much of the military force from the South to their own suppression, and thus allowed Shivāji comparative freedom to attain the climax of his career (1676-79).

"The reign of Aurangzeb," observes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "is naturally divided into two equal parts of about 25 years each, the first



of which he passed in Northern India and the second in the Deccan. During the earlier of these two periods the centre of interest lies unmistakably in the North, not because the Emperor lived there, but because the most important developments, civil and military, concerned this region, while the South figured as a far off and negligible factor. In the second half of the reign the situation is reversed : all resources of the empire are concentrated in the Deccan ; the Emperor, his court and family, the bulk of the army, and all his best officers live there for a quarter century, and Hindustan sinks back to a place of secondary importance."

#### NORTH INDIA :

Apart from the two frontier wars already described, the disturbances in North India were of two classes : (a) revolts against Aurangzeb's religious policy ; (b) minor disorders created by pretenders, unsubmissive chieftains, or pirates. The latter may be disposed off with a brief notice before proceeding to the former.

*Minor Disturbances* : Throughout the reign a series of pretenders caused some temporary excitement in different parts of the Empire. There were : a false Dārā in Gujarat (1663), a false Shujā in Morang (west of Kuch-Bihar, 1669), another among the Yusufzai (1674), a third in Kashmir (1707), a bogus son of Shujā in Allahābad (1699), and a counterfeit Akbar in the Deccan (1699).

The principal chieftains or Rājas to cause the movements of armies were (1) Rao Karan of Bikāner, who submitted towards the close of 1660 ; (2) Champat Rai Bundela (a collateral descendant of Bīr Singh Dev), who after considerable fighting committed suicide together with his Rāni, Kālī Kumāri, rather than submit to the Mughal (1661) ; (3) the Chero Rāja of Palmau, whose kingdom was annexed to the *Subah* of Bihar, 1661 ; (4) the rebel prince of Morang, who was forced into submission in 1664, and again in 1676 ; and (5) Rāja Bahādur Chand of Kumaon, who after a protracted struggle (1665-1673) also submitted. The Buddhist ruler of Tibet too acknowledged Mughal suzerainty in 1665, as the result of an expedition led from Kashmir. The pirates of Chatgaon will be dealt with later in the section on Europeans. We now turn to the principal disturbances in North India which were due to Aurangzeb's wanton attacks on the Hindus.

*Persecution of Hindus* : The religious policy of Aurangzeb and

his attitude towards non-Muslims in general, together with a discussion of all its implications, will be taken up at the end of this chapter. The persecution of the Hindus was the most momentous feature of Aurangzeb's reign. But for it, in spite of his puritanism, his régime might have been one of the most glorious instead of being the most ominous and fateful. Despite the fact that Aurangzeb had in him nearly as much Hindu blood as Muslim, he turned out to be a bitter hater of the Hindus. His grandmother (Shāh Jahān's mother) was a Hindu. Shāh Jahān's father was only half Muslim, inasmuch as his mother too was a Hindu. One of Aurangzeb's own principal queens (Nawāb Bāi, the mother of his successor Bahādur Shāh) was also a Hindu, being the daughter of the Rajput Rāja Rāju of the Rājauri State in Kashmir. So too was Aurangzeb's favourite Hirā Bāi with whom he fell head over heels in love at Burhānpur, during his second viceroyalty of the Deccan. Of his other wives, one was a Persian (Dilras Bānu Begam), daughter of Shāh Nawāz Khān, a scion of the ruling house of Persia—the champion of the Shiah sect; another (Udipuri Mahāl, the mother of Kām Bakhsh) was, according to the contemporary Venetian traveller Manucci, a Georgian slave-girl captured from Dārā Shukoh's *harem*. What a long list of contaminating contacts! But Aurangzeb's fanaticism was certainly not born in the *harem*, as Akbar's eclecticism is supposed to have been, by some writers.

That this bigoted policy was not fitful, as in the case of Shāh Jahān's destruction of temples, but deliberate and relentlessly systematic, will be borne out by the following collocation of facts :—

1. Wholesale destruction of Hindu temples.
2. Re-imposition of the hated *Jizya*.
3. Exaction of heavier customs duties from Hindus.
4. Dismissal of Hindus from Imperial services.
5. Prohibition against the free exercise of their religious rites—*Holi* and *Diwāli*.
6. Prohibition of Hindu fairs.
7. Prohibition of wearing arms, fine dresses, and riding by Hindus.
8. Proscription of Hindu learning.

*Destruction of Temples* : “Aurangzeb began his attack on Hinduism,” observes Prof. Sarkar, “in an insidious way.” He pre-

tended at first only to prohibit the building of new temples by the infidels.\* Early in his reign local officers in every town and village in Orissa, from Cuttack to Medinipur, were asked to pull down all temples, great and small, built during the last ten or twelve years and *to allow no old temple to be repaired*. The final step in this direction was the general order issued in April, 1669.

'On the 17th Zi-lkada, 1079, it reached the ear of His Majesty, the Protector of the Faith, that in the provinces of Thatta, Multan, and Benares, but especially in the latter, foolish Brāhmaṇs were in the habit of expounding frivolous books in their schools, and that students and learners, Musulmans as well as Hindus went there, even from long distances, led by a desire to become acquainted with the wicked sciences they taught. The Director of the Faith consequently issued orders to all the governors of provinces to destroy with a willing hand the schools and temples of the infidels; and they were strictly enjoined to put an entire stop to the teaching and practising of idolatrous forms of worship.'

Order issued on all *fauj-dars* of *thanahs*, civil officers (*Mutsaddis*), agents of *jagirdars*, *kroris* and *amlas*,—'Every idol-house built during the last 10 or 12 years, whether with brick or clay, should be demolished without delay. Also, do not allow the cursed Hindus and despicable infidels to repair their old temples. Report of the destruction of temples should be sent to the Court under the seal of the *qāzis* and attested by pious Sheikhs.'

Aurangzeb's iconoclastic zeal appears to have been conceived very early in his life. In 1645, while he was Governor of Gujarat, he converted the temple of Chintāmaṇ into a mosque and named it *Quwat-ul-Islam*. He also ordered a cow to be slaughtered in the shrine. But the building was restored to the Hindus by order of Shāh Jahān. However, when Aurangzeb came into power, he issued a *firmān* (dated 20 November, 1665) to the following effect :—'In Ahmedābad and other *parganas* of Gujarat in the days before my

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\* This is indicated by the Benares *Firmān* of Aurangzeb, addressed to Abdul Hasan, dated 28 February, 1659, granted through the mediation of Prince Muhammad. It reads :—'It has been decided according to our Canon Law that long-standing temples should not be demolished, but no new temple allowed to be built... Information has reached our... Court that certain persons have harassed the Hindus resident in Benares and its environs and certain Brāhmaṇs who have the right of holding charge of the ancient temples there, and that they further desire to remove these Brāhmaṇs from their ancient office. Therefore, our royal command is that you should direct that in future no person shall in unlawful ways interfere with or disturb the Brāhmaṇs and other Hindus resident in those places.'

accession [many] temples were destroyed by my order. They have been repaired and idol worship has been resumed. Carry out the former order.' Among the famous temples thus destroyed in this tornado of fanatical fury, were those of Somnāth (Kathiawar) Vishwanāth (Benares) and the *Dehrā of Keshav Rāi* (Mathura, built by Bir Singh Dev Bundela, at a cost of 33 *lakhs* of Rupees). There was also wholesale demolition of temples in Kutch-Bihar, Ujjain, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Golkonda, Bijapur and Mahārāshtra. In 1674 lands held by Hindus in Gujarat, in religious grants, were all confiscated.

*Jizya* : 'Fight those who do not profess the true faith, till they pay *jizya* with the hand in humility,' said the Prophet of Islam (*Kuran*, ix, 29). Yet this invidious tax had not been levied within the Mughal dominions since its abolition by Akbar more than a century before Alamgīr, the World-Compeller, revived it. In the words of the official history compiled from State papers : 'All the aims of the religious Emperor being directed to the spread of the law of Islam and the overthrow of infidel practices, he issued orders that, from Rabiul (2nd April, 1679), *jizya* should be levied from the *zimmi*s in accordance with the Quranic injunction.' "The theory of some modern writers that the *jaziya* was only commutation money paid for exemption from military service," says Sir J. N. Sarkar, "is not borne out by history." He also observes, "We shall not be far wrong in holding that the *jaziya* meant for the Hindus an addition of fully one-third to every subject's *direct* contribution to the State."

The enthusiasm with which the poll-tax was collected by the more fanatical officers is illustrated by the conduct of Mir Abdul Karim, Prefect of the City of Burhānpur. He "increased the yield of the tax from Rs. 26,000 a year for the whole city to more than four times the amount in three months for half the city only (1682)." The Emperor's attitude about this special imposition was—"You are free to grant remissions of revenue of all other kinds; but if you remit any man's *jaziya* which I have succeeded with great difficulty in laying on the infidels, it will be an impious change (*bidat*) and will cause the whole system of collecting the poll-tax to fall into disorder." So, when thousands of Hindus gathered to remonstrate to the Emperor, he gave them an hour's time to disperse, and then simply rode his elephant through their protests.

**Customs Duties :** Unfortunately the *jizya* was not the only invidious tax that the Hindus had to pay.

'An order was promulgated,' says Khāfi Khān, 'exempting the commercial goods of Musulmans from tax throughout the dominions of Hindustan. The revenue officers then reported that Musulmans had adopted the practice of dividing their goods into small parcels in order to avoid the duty and that they passed the goods of Hindus in their names, and thus the payment of the *zakāt* prescribed by the Law was avoided. So an order was given that, according to the Law, two and a half per cent. should be taken from Musulmans and five per cent from Hindus.' Sarkar gives a slightly different version of this discrimination but the basic fact to be noted is that distinction was made between subjects on account of their religious creed. To be a Hindu was itself a disability.

**Other Anti-Hindu Measures :** In November, 1665, Aurangzeb issued a proclamation in Gujarat to the following effect :—

'In the city and *parganas* of Ahmedābad (i.e., Gujarat), the Hindus following their superstitious customs light lamps in the night of *diwālī* and during the days of *holi* open their mouths in obscene speech and kindle the *holi* bonfire in *chaklās* and *bazārs*, throwing into the fire the faggot of all people that they can seize by force or theft. It is ordered that in *bazārs* there should be no illumination at *diwālī*, nobody's faggot should be taken by force or theft and flung into the *holā* bonfire, and no obscene language used.' Although the regulation regarding *holi* was undoubtedly a wholesome measure, its being coupled with the prohibition of *diwālī* illuminations was calculated to excite Hindu popular feeling. Similarly, in 1668, following the example of Firūz Tughlak in the 14th century, Aurangzeb also forbade Hindu *jātras* though at such times, as Khāfi Khān says, '*lacs of rupees change hands in buying and selling, and large sums accrue to the provincial treasuries.*' In 1671 it was laid down that all rent-collectors in Crown lands ought to be Muslims. The provincial viceroys and *tālukdārs* were also called upon to dismiss their Hindu head-clerks and accountants and to replace them by Muhammadans. And to crown all, in March 1695, all Hindus excepting Rajputs were forbidden to ride well-bred horses, elephants or *pālkis*, and to wear arms. This arbitrary rule provoked even the meek Hindus to rebel, and a large crop of troubles sprang from this sowing of the dragon's teeth.

### *Hindu Reaction :*

**Jāt Rebellions :** The first reaction showed itself in a series of peasants' risings round about Mathura. "Some frantic attempts were made on the Emperor's life, but they were childish and ended in failure." In June 1669 Kāzi Abdul Mukaram was murdered by the disciples of a Hindu *sādhu* named Uddhav Bhairāgi, as the latter had

been imprisoned 'for his seduction of men to false knowledge.' As a result of both, the murderers and the *sādhu* were put to death by order of Aurangzeb.

Abdun Nabi, *faujdar* of Mathura, had provoked the people by his destruction of a Hindu temple and the erection of a mosque on its site, in 1661-2. By order of Aurangzeb he had also forcibly removed, in 1666, the stone railing presented to the Keshav Rāi temple by Dārā Shukoh. Such acts became more and more frequent. Consequently, there was a rising of the Jāt peasants in 1669. In an attempt to put down the revolt under Gokla of Tilpat, Abdun Nabi was shot dead. Reprisals followed, and towards the close of the year, or beginning of 1670, the rich temple of Keshav Rāi was razed to the ground, and a mosque erected in its place. 'The den of iniquity was thus destroyed,' writes Saki Mustā'id Khān. 'It owed its erection to Nar (Bīr?) Singh Deo Bundela, an ignorant and depraved man. . . .Thirty-three *lacs* were expended on this work.' Lawlessness increased and spread toward Agra, until Gokla Jat's following numbered 20,000 strong. Finally, in a terrible engagement, the rebel leader was taken captive and hacked to pieces. 4,000 of the victors and 5,000 of the rebels died fighting; 7,000, including Gokla's family, were arrested, and forcibly converted with the exception of those who were proved innocent and released. During the campaign, the Emperor, with admirable inconsistency, "humanely detached 200 horsemen to guard the crops of the villagers and prevent the soldiers from oppressing any of them and taking any child prisoner." Yet in March, 1670, Hasan Ali Khān was "engaged in slaying and capturing the rebels, plundering their houses, *extirpating their families*, and dismantling their strong [mud] forts." Again in June 1681, a *faujdar* in the environs of Agra was obliged to lead an expedition against the Jāts, and got killed in the attempt. As late as 1688, the irrepressible Jāts once more raised the standard of revolt under Rāja-Rām, and after his death under Churāman Jāt. They carried on a desultory warfare until the end of Aurangzeb's reign, "and could not be subdued by that Emperor's decadent successors."

*Satnāmi Rising* : The *Satnāmis* (or followers of the True Name of God) were a strange sect with their stronghold at Narnaul (75 miles s. w. of Delhi). Khāfi Khān writes :—

'One of the remarkable occurrences of this year (May 1672) was the outburst of the Hindu devotees called *Satnāmis*, who are also known by the name of *Mundihs* (i.e., clean shaven fellows). There were four or five thousand of these, who were house-holders in the *parganas* of Narnaul and Mewat. These men dress like devotees, but they nevertheless carry on agriculture and trade, though their trade is on a small scale. In the way of their religion they have dignified themselves with the title of "Good Name," this being the meaning of *Sat-nām*. *They are not allowed to acquire wealth in any but a beautiful calling. If any one attempts to wrong or oppress them by force, or by exercise of authority, they will not endure it.* Many of them have weapons and arms.

'At the time Aurangzeb was returning from Hasan Abdal, a strong altercation arose one day near Narnaul, between a man of this sect, who was engaged in agricultural work, and a man who was keeping watch over the harvest. The latter broke the *Satnāmi's* head with his staff. A number of *Satnāmis* then collected and beat the watchman, so that they left him for dead. When intelligence reached the *shikdār*, he assembled his men and sent them to arrest those *Satnāmis*. Meantime numbers of the *Satnāmis* assembled. They attacked the *shikdār's* men, overpowered them, wounded several, and took away their arms. Their numbers went on increasing, and information was carried to Kar-talab Khān, *faujdār* of Narnaul. . . To shorten a long story, suffice it to say that after several fights the *faujdār* was killed, and the town of Narnaul fell into the hands of the *Satnāmis*. They proceeded to collect the taxes from the villages, and established posts of their own. When the Emperor reached Delhi, he was informed of this outbreak, and he sent force after force to quell it, but they were all defeated and dispersed. It was said that swords, arrows, and musket-balls had no effect upon these men, and that every arrow and ball which they charged against the royal army brought down two or three men. Thus they were credited with magic and witch-craft, and stories were currently reported about them which were utterly incredible. They were said to have magic wooden horses like live ones, on which their women rode as an advance guard.

'Great *Rājas* and veteran *amirs* were sent against them with powerful armies. But the rebels were eager for the fight, and advanced to about sixteen or seventeen *kos* from Delhi. The royal army went forth boldly to attack them; but the *zamindars* of the neighbourhood, and some cowardly Rajputs, seized the opportunity to throw off their obedience, and to withhold the government dues. They even broke out into open violence, and the flames daily increased. The King ordered his tents to be brought out. He then wrote some prayers and devices with his own hands, which he ordered to be sewn on the banners and standards, and carried against the rebels. At length, by the exertions of Rāja Bishan Singh, Hamid Khān, and others, several thousands of them were killed, and the rest were put to flight, so that the outbreak was quelled.'

*The Sikhs* : The Sikh religion, founded by Bābā Nānak (c. 1469-1539 A.D.) was the outcome of the impact of Islam on Hinduism. In the words of Bhāi Gurudās : ‘ *Truth is hidden both from the Hindus and the Muhammadans ; both sects have gone astray. But when they lay aside superstition they form one body of Sikhs.*’ The Apostolate of the Sikhs, from Bābā Nānak, the founder, to Guru Govind Singh the last Guru, consisted of ten leaders. Their total régime lasted from 1469-1708, i.e., almost exactly synchronous with the Great Mughals, from Bābur to Aurangzeb.

The second, Guru Angad (1539—52), was a contemporary of Humāyun (1530-56). The fifth, Guru Arjun (1581-1606), had become so important that, according to a contemporary, ‘The Emperor [Akbar] and kings bow before him. Wealth ever cometh to him.’ We have already observed the fate of this Guru under Jahāngir : his sympathy with the rebellious prince Khusru ended in his virtual execution. His son and successor, Har Govind (1606-45), was cast in a martial mould. “I wear two swords, he said, “as emblems of spiritual and temporal authority. In the Guru’s house religion and worldly enjoyment shall be combined.” He had to undergo twelve years of confinement in Gwalior fort for his father’s non-payment of the fine imposed upon him by Jahāngir. Early in the reign of Shāh Jahān (1628), Har Govind’s pompous retinue came into conflict with an Imperial hunting party. This led to military retaliation, in which the Imperialists were routed with heavy loss at Sangrāna, near Amritsar. But finally, the rebellious Guru was forced to take refuge at Kirātpur in the Kashmir Hills, where he died in 1645. Dārā Shukoh paid frequent visits to Har Rai, the seventh Guru (1645-61), and was blessed by him.

When Aurangzeb ascended the throne, he called upon Har Rai to answer for this ; but Har Rai only sent his eldest son, Rām Rai, to the Imperial Court. The latter having fallen into the Imperial trap, was disinherited by the father, who consequently, at the time of his death (1661), nominated his second son, Har Kishen, successor. Rām Rai thereupon contested the *gādi* with the support of Aurangzeb. Har Kishen was sent for, but death snatched him away in 1664. However, the choice of the Sikh community now fell on Tegh Bahādur, the youngest son of Har Govind. In 1668 this new Guru appears to have fought in the Mughal ranks in the Assam war, under Rām Rāja, the son of Mirza Rāja Jai Singh. But on his return to the Punjab, “he was drawn into the whirlwind which Aurangzeb had raised by his policy of religious persecution. A soldier and priest could not remain indifferent while his creed was



being wantonly attacked and its holy places desecrated." So he threw himself heart and soul into the movement against forcible conversions that had been going on in Kashmir and other places. Such conduct was bound to arouse Imperial wrath sooner or later; and when it happened the Guru ended his life as a martyr.

Tegh Bahādur, on his way to Delhi, anticipating his fate, handed on the torch of hatred to his son and successor, Govind Singh. "Girding upon him the sword of Har Govind, he hailed him as the Gooroo of the Sikhs. He told him he was himself being led to death, he counselled him not to leave his body a prey to dogs, and *he enjoined upon him the necessity and the merit of revenge.*" At the time of these happenings Govind Singh was only fifteen years of age. "The violent end and the last injunction of the martyr Gooroo, made a deep impression on the mind of Govind, and in brooding over his own loss and the fallen condition of his country, he became the irreconcilable foe of the Mahometan name, and conceived the noble idea of moulding the vanquished Hindoos into a new and aspiring people."

We need not trace in detail the personal history and training of Guru Govind for the task he had set himself :

"In the heart of a powerful empire he set himself the task of subverting it, and from the midst of social degradation and religious corruption, he called up simplicity of manners, singleness of purpose, and enthusiasm of desire. Govind was equally bold, systematic, and sanguine; but it is not necessary to suppose him either an unscrupulous impostor or a self-deluded enthusiast. He thought that the minds of men might be wrought upon to great purpose, . . . and he believed the time had come for another teacher to arouse the latent energies of the human will. His memory was filled with the deeds of primeval seers and heroes; his imagination dwelt on successive dispensations for the instruction of the world, and his mind was perhaps unhinged with a superstitious belief in his own earthly destiny."

In short, Guru Govind Singh, the tenth and last of the Sikh Apostolate (1676-1708), was one of whom it had been said: 'He could convert jackals into tigers and sparrows into hawks.' He inspired his followers with the belief that 'where there are two Sikhs there is a company of saints; where there are five Sikhs, there is God!' He made the Sikhs homogeneous by the abolition of all caste distinctions, and making them 'as free in matters of eating and drinking as a Musulman.' "I shall make men of all

four castes lions," he said, "and destroy the Mughals." He drilled and disciplined his men into a body of iron-sides. Indeed, as Prof. Sarkar has well observed: "If Cromwell's Ironsides could have been inspired with the Jesuits' unquestioning acceptance of their Superior's decisions on moral and spiritual questions, the result would have equalled Guru Govind's Sikhs as a fighting machine."

To oppose Mughal Imperialism he assumed the outward insignia of its grandeur. He lived in princely state, "kept a train of poets in his court, and made plenty of gold ornaments for himself and his family. His body-guards were provided with arrows tipped with gold to the value of Rs. 16 each; and he had a big war drum made in imitation of the Mughal Imperial band." But among fellow Sikhs he lived on terms of perfect equality. When he introduced the new baptism, to the great astonishment of his disciples, he received it in return at their hands! When he organised the Sikh community as the *Khālṣa* (the pure, or God's own people), he gave them the appellation of *Singhs* or lions. They were always to wear the five Ks: *Kes*—long hair, *Kangha*—a comb, *Kirpan*—a sword, *Keach*—shorts, and *Kara*—a steel bracelet. The nature of the transformation is well indicated in the Guru's first address to his disciples: "Since the time of Bābā Nānak," he said, "*Charan-pāhul* hath been customary. Men drank the water in which the Gurus had washed their feet, a custom which led to great humility; but *Khālṣa* can now only be maintained as a nation by bravery and skill in arms. Therefore, I now institute the custom of baptism by water stirred with a dagger and change my followers from *Sikhs* (disciples) to *Singhs* (lions)." Ere long he gathered together a formidable force of about 80,000 followers.

He had for a long time to contend with the local chieftains and *Rājas* in Kashmir and the Punjab, then ultimately with the organised might of the Empire. In the course of these struggles, strongly reminiscent of the trials and tribulations, the fortitude and courage and determination of Rāṇa Pratāp Singh, he lost two of his sons in fighting, and two others gave their heads as the penalty for refusing to apostatise. On hearing of these losses the Guru uprooted a shrub by his side, and exclaimed like Chānakya, "As I dig up this shrub by the roots, so shall the Turks be extirpated." Of course he did not live to achieve this ambition. But as Cunningham truly points out, success is not always the measure of greatness. "The last apostle of the Sikhs did not live to see his own ends accomplished, but he effectively roused the dormant energies of a vanquished people, and filled them with a lofty although fitful longing for social freedom and national ascendancy."

The last act of Guru Govind breathing defiance was the letter he addressed to Aurangzeb, known as the *Zafar Nāmā*. When the Emperor summoned him to his presence, he wrote to him declaring.

'I have not a particle of confidence in thee. I was forced to engage in the combat and fought to the utmost of my ability. When an affair passeth beyond the region of diplomacy, it is lawful to have recourse to the sword. If thou come to the village of Kangar, we shall have an interview. Thou shalt not run the slightest danger on the way, for the whole tribe of Bairars are under me. I am a slave and servant of the King of kings and ready to obey His order with my life. If thou hast any belief in God, delay not in this matter. It is thy duty to know God. He never ordered thee to annoy others. Thou art seated on an Emperor's throne; yet how strange are thy justice, thine attributes and thy regard for religion! Alas, a hundred times alas! for thy sovereignty! Strange, strange is thy decree! Smite not any one mercilessly with thy sword, or a sword from on high shall smite thyself. O man, be not reckless, fear God. He is the Emperor of earth and heaven. He is the creator of all animals from the feeble to the strong elephant. He is the Protector of the miserable, and destroyer of the reckless. What though my four sons were killed? I remain behind like a coiled snake. What bravery is it to quench a few sparks of life? Thou art merely exciting a raging fire. I will not enter thy presence, nor travel on the same road with thee, but if God so will it, I will proceed against thee. When thou lookest to thine army and wealth, I look to God's praises. Thou art proud of thine Empire, while I am proud of the Kingdom of the Immortal God. Be not heedless; *this caravanserai is only for a few days*. People leave it at all times. Even though thou art strong, annoy not the weak. *Lay not the axe to thy Kingdom.*'

The Emperor, indeed, left this caravanserai in a few days, and the prophetic Guru was saved for the time being. When Prince Muazzam was on his way to secure Aurangzeb's throne, Guru Govind joined him. In recognition of the service rendered by the Khālsa army, Bahādur Shāh put Govind Singh in command of 5,000 horse. But during the campaign in the Deccan, whither Guru Govind had accompanied the Emperor, he was assassinated by a Pathān who had an ancient grudge to feed fat on him. This happened at Nānder on the Godāvarī (150 miles north-west of Haidarābad) in 1708. With him ended the Sikh Apostolate of the Ten Gurus. His constant desire had been—

*Now be pleased to grant me the boon I crave with clasped hands :  
That when the end of life cometh, I may die fighting in a mighty  
battle!*

His last message to his followers was : " I have entrusted you to the Immortal God. Ever remain under His protection ; trust no one besides. Wherever there are five Sikhs assembled, who abide by the Guru's teachings, know that I am in the midst of them...I have infused my soul into the *Khālsa* and the *Granth Sāhib* ...Obey the *Granth Sāhib*. It is the visible body of the Guru. And let him who desireth to meet me diligently search its hymns."

### *Rajput Resistance :*

*Chitor* : Towards the close of Shāh Jahān's reign (1653-54 A.D.) Rāṇa Jagat Singh of Udaipur had made bold to restore the walls of Chitor, against treaty-stipulations since their destruction by Akbar.

Shāh Jahān, when he came to know this, 'despatched Allami, with a large number of nobles and *mansabdārs* and 1,500 musketeers, amounting altogether to 30,000, for the purpose of hurrying on in that direction, and demolishing the fort of Chitor. On the 5th of Zi-l hijja, this year, having reached the environs of Chitor, he directed working parties with pick-axes and spades to overthrow that powerful stronghold. Accordingly, in the course of fourteen or fifteen days, they laid its towers and battlements in ruins, and having dug up and subverted both the old and the new walls, levelled the whole to the ground. The Rāṇa having awoke from his sleep of heedlessness at the advent of the prosperous banners at Ajmer, the irresistible force of the royal arms, the dispersion of the peasantry, and the ruin of his territory, sent off a letter containing the humblest apologies to Court, along with his eldest son, who was in his sixth year. A *firmān* was then issued that since the fort had to be demolished, and the Rāṇa had sent off his son to Court, *the pen of forgiveness had been drawn through the register of his delinquencies* at the Prince Buland Ikbāl's solicitation.'

*Lull before the Storm* : Rajputāna was at peace with the Empire for a quarter century since this happened. Rāṇa Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and Jai Singh of Amber (Jaipur) commanded Mughal armies against the Marathas, as we shall see in a later section of this chapter. During the fateful War of Succession, the former had, indeed, fought against Aurangzeb at Dharmat, and, betrayed him at Khajwah. But Aurangzeb finally won him over. The crafty Emperor, says Tod, 'always preferred stratagem to the precarious issue of arms' and 'addressed a letter to Jaswant, not only assuring him of his entire forgiveness, but offering the viceroyalty of Gujarat if he would withdraw his support from Dārā, and remain neuter in the contest.' This was achieved through the mediation

of Mirza Rāja Jai Singh, after Khajwah and before Deorai (5 January—13 March, 1659). In spite of their good services, however, the two Rājas shared an equally disastrous fate. Aurangzeb suspected both of complicity with Shivāji, and ultimately got rid of both by poisoning the one and sending the other "beyond the Attok to die."

Sighs never ceased from Aurangzeb's heart, it was said, while Jaswant Singh lived. In the estimation of the immortal historian of Rājasthān :

"The life of Jeswant Singh is one of the most extraordinary in the annals of Rajpootāna . . . Throughout the long period of two and forty years, events of magnitude crowded upon each other, from the period of his first contest with Aurangzeb, . . . to his conflicts with the Afghans. Although the Rahtore had a preference amongst the sons of Shāh Jahān, estimating the frank Dārā above the crafty Aurangzeb, yet he detested the whole race as inimical to the religion and the independence of his own ; and he only fed the hopes of any of the brothers, in their struggles for empire, expecting that they would end in the ruin of all."

*Invasion of Mārwār* : The twenty-five years of Rajput acquiescence, following the dismantling of Chitor, therefore, formed merely a lull before the storm. The death of Jaswant Singh at Jamrud, on 10th December, 1678, was practically a signal for war. The valiant Rajput had been sent to fight the Afghans with the hope that he might not return. During his absence 'Māroo' (Mārwār) had been left in the charge of Prithvī Singh, Jaswant Singh's heir. Aurangzeb summoned Prithvī Singh to his Court and at the end of a flattering entertainment presented him with a poisoned 'dress of honour'—"That day was his last !" This bereavement, together with the loss of two other sons at Kabul, hastened the death of Jaswant Singh who had been sufficiently worn out by the trials of the campaign. Before three weeks were out Aurangzeb's plans regarding Jodhpur had already been set in motion.

The State being virtually without a head, and Jaswant's best troops away in Afghanistan, the Mughals had an easy way to everything. Muslim officers were at once appointed to the posts of *Faujdar*, *Qilādār*, *Kotwāl*, and *Amīn* at Jodhpur. On 9 January, 1679, Aurangzeb himself set out for Ajmer to overawe opposition. On 7 February, Khān-i Jahān Bahādur was despatched with a band of high officers "to occupy the country, to demolish its temples, and seize the late Mahārājah's property." On 2 April Aurangzeb

returned to Delhi and took the momentous step of re-imposing the *jizya*. Evidently he was flushed with the triumph of having subjugated Jodhpur, the rallying centre of militant Hinduism in the North. Next month Khān-i Jahān returned to Court taking with him cart-loads of broken idols from Jodhpur to be trodden under foot by pious Muslims at the capital. To complete the work of humiliating Mārwar, the throne of Jaswant Singh was sold to the Chief of Nagar for 36 *lakhs* of Rupees, and the latter occupied it on 26 May, 1679, under Imperial escort.

*Ajit Singh and Durgādās* : But soon a cloud appeared on the horizon. Two widowed queens of the dead Mahārāja had given birth to two sons at Lahore in February. Though one of these succumbed within a few weeks, the other lived to sit on his father's throne, at the end of a very romantic career. This was Ajit Singh the protégé of the heroic Durgādās, whom Tod describes as the Ulysses of the Rahtors, and whom the Rajputs still adore as the epitome of their chivalry. "This model of a Rajpoot, as he was brave, was the saviour of his country. To his suggestion it owed the preservation of its prince, and to a series of heroic deeds, his subsequent and more difficult salvation."

Aurangzeb, when he heard of the posthumous children, at once thought of capturing them. They were brought to Delhi, but the strategy of Durgādās saved Ajit Singh for Mārwar. The narrative of how it happened may be told in the words of Khāfi Khān :—

'There was an old standing grievance in the Emperor's heart respecting Rāja Jaswant Singh's tribute, which was aggravated by these posthumous proceedings of the Rajputs. He ordered the *kotwāl* to take his own men, with an additional force obtained from the *mansabdārs*, as well as some artillery, and to surround the camp of the Rajputs and keep guard over them. Meanwhile the Rajputs had obtained two boys of the same age as the Rāja's children. They dressed some of the female attendants in the garments of the *rānis*, and taking every precaution that their stratagem should not be discovered, they left these women and the boys under guard in their camp. The (real) *rānis* disguised as men, went off at night in charge of two trusty servants and a party of devoted Rajputs, and made their way with all speed to their own country. The brave and active chiefs, who might have stopped or overtaken them, were keeping guard over the tents in which the pretended children of the Rāja were. After two or three watches, when a report of the fact was made, some officials were sent to make inquiries, and it was repeatedly stated that the *rānis* and the children were still there. Orders were then given for taking all the Rāja's followers into the fortress. The Rajputs and

the disguised women, who were ready to fight like men for the honour of their Rāja, made a determined resistance. Many were killed, but the party escaped.'

The whole strategy had been planned and executed by Durgādās, a son of Jaswant Singh's minister Askaran, Baron of Drunera. "Fighting against terrible odds and a host of enemies on every side, with distrust and wavering among his own countrymen, he kept the cause of his chieftain triumphant. Mughal gold could not seduce, Mughal arms could not daunt that constant heart. Almost alone among the Rahtors he displayed the rare combination of the dash and reckless valour of a Rajput soldier with the tact, diplomacy and organising power of a Mughal minister of State." 'The other death-loving Rajputs' who immortalised themselves by staying the Mughal pursuit of the fugitives at every step, at the cost of their own lives, were Raghunāth Bhatti and Ranchhordās Jodha. While the route from Delhi to Mārwar, up to the point of the pursuers' exhaustion, was being dyed with the blood of brave Rajput bands, the custodians of Ajit Singh reached Jodhpur with their precious charge (23 July, 1679). Mārwar quickly rallied round its infant king.

But Aurangzeb, ever resourceful in political legerdemain, declared Ajit Singh a pretender, and proclaimed a milk-man's lad of equal age, in his own custody, the real heir of Jaswant Singh. This Imperial ward was brought up in the Mughal *harem* as a rival to Ajit Singh, under the sinister name of Muhammadi Rāj ! At the same time a strong force of Mussalmans was sent to Mārwar for the reconquest of that State. "Anarchy and slaughter were let loose on the doomed province."

On 25 September, Aurangzeb once again took his headquarters at Ajmer. Prince Muhammad Akbar, who was soon to play the rôle of Destiny, was put in charge of the campaign, with Tahawwur Khān, *faujdar* of Ajmer, as second-in-command. The first scene of the tragedy opened with the slaughter of the brave band of Mairta Rāhtors under Rāj Singh—the Leonidas of this Thermopylæ—at the temple of the Sacred Boar, near lake Pushkar. Thereafter every house in Mārwar became a stronghold to be captured and every Rāhtor became a stubborn Hereward the Wake. 'Māroo' was transformed into one vast arena of blood-shed, pillage, and devastation. Mosques arose like mushrooms on the sites of temples to pro-

claim the triumph of Islam in this Jerusalem of the Hindus. The nest was scattered though the bird had flown !

‘As the cloud pours water upon the earth, so did Aurangzeb pour his barbarians over the land.’ It was indeed a calamity not for Mārṡār alone, but an imminent danger to Mewar and other Rajput States as well. “The annexation of Mārṡār was but the preliminary to an easy conquest of Mewar.” Besides, the rage for temple destruction was not likely to be stopped by the Aravalli range. Already the demand for *jizya* had been made even from the Mahārāṇa. The Sisodias, therefore, had every reason to make common cause with the Rāhtors. The fact that Ajit Singh’s mother was a Mewar Princess, made such a combination both easy and natural.

Mahārāṇa Rāj Singh, accordingly began preparations for the defence of Mewar. He again fortified Chitor, and blocked the Deobari Pass leading to his capital. But Aurangzeb was too experienced a general to await developments. He left Ajmer on 30 November, 1679, for Udaipur. Deobari was occupied on 4 January, 1680. The Rajputs, finding themselves unequal to the enemy on the low lands, retired to the mountains, leaving even their capital deserted. So, Udaipur was occupied without much struggle. Its only defenders were in the great temple—‘One of the wonders of the age and a building that had cost the infidels much money ; but the Muslims made short work of them.’ This and three more temples of Udaishāgar met the same fate. Hassan Ali Khān, the Mughal commander, desperately in search of the fugitives, found himself in a quandary for some time. The Rāṇa was, however, defeated on 22 January. No less than 173 temples in the environs of Udaipur, and 63 in Chitor, fell under the strokes of the enemy. His work thus accomplished, Aurangzeb returned to Ajmer on 22 March. Prince Akbar, with his base at Chitor, was left in charge of the rest. The Mughals had to pay dearly for this hasty retreat of the Emperor. Akbar was either too ill-equipped or too incompetent to meet the situation. The Sisodias began to harass the enemy with the elusive tactics of guerilla warfare. By May the Rāṇa inflicted heavy losses on the Mughals. “A few days later, the Rajputs carried off a convoy of *banjaras* with 10,000 pack-oxen bringing grain to the prince’s army from Mālwa.” Bhīm Singh, the Rāṇa’s son, inflicted swift and sudden blows at unexpected points. “Our army,” Akbar complained, “is motionless through fear !”



With this confession of defeat, Akbar was transferred to Mārṡār. The Mewar command was now entrusted to Prince Āzam (26 June); the other two Princes were merely to co-operate with him in delivering a three-fold attack : Āzam from Chitor, Muazzam from Rājsamudra and Akbar from Deosuri. The plan, however, miscarried.

Akbar took up his headquarters at Sojat (in Mārṡār) on 18 July, 1680. But the situation became so perilous that the Prince only made a show of movement without any real action. At the end of September he shifted to Nadol, and on 19 November, under impatient orders from Aurangzeb, like 'the whining schoolboy, with his satchel, . . . creeping like snail unwillingly to school' (but without his 'shining morning face'), Akbar advanced up to Deosuri. But the result of this pressure in an impossible situation was far from what Aurangzeb had ever dreamt of. The year 1681 dawned with treason on its brow.

*Akbar's Revolt* : On 1 January, Prince Muhammad Akbar donned the imperial robes, with the blessings of four *Mullahs* who declared Aurangzeb deposed for '*violation of the Islamic Canon Law* !'

Thirty thousand Rajputs under Durgādās joined the Prince. The news spread from tent to tent, and was the talk of young and old. It was reported that he had ascended the throne, and that coins had been struck in his name ; that Tahawwur Khān had been made a *haft-hazāri*, and had received the title of *Amirul umra* ; that Mujahid Khān and other great servants of State, who were with the Prince, had received distinguished honours, which some of them had felt themselves constrained to accept. The prince was doing his best to win the affections of all, and was said to be marching against Aurangzeb.

Meanwhile, there were a few important defections in the camp of the rebel Prince. Shihabu-d-dīn Khān (father of the first Nizām) was the first Mughal captain, after a hard two days' ride of 120 miles, to bring his brother Mujahid Khan from Akbar to Aurangzeb. Next was Akbar's right-hand man Tahawwur Khān, who was weaned away by a threatening letter from his father-in-law Ināyat Khān (Aurangzeb's secretary). In it Tahawwur Khān was promised a pardon for his indiscretion, and, failing response, he was threatened that 'his women would be publicly outraged and his sons sold into slavery at the price of dogs.' (What a contrast to the

conduct of Durgādās, who, when Akbar was in flight, as we shall presently see, gave shelter to his family and provided for their education at the hands of Muslim tutors !). The fate of Tahawwur, for all his whimsical conduct, was terrible. When he reached Aurangzeb's camp, he asserted the dignity of a Mughal courtier to enter the presence without being disarmed. This insistence was looked upon with suspicion of designs on the Emperor's life. From words at last he came to blows. 'Numbers fell upon him, and he was soon killed, and his head was cut off.'

However, this might have happened, says Khāfi Khān, 'his murder caused great divisions in the Prince's army, and among his Rajputs, and they were much dispirited.' At such a moment Aurangzeb, it is alleged, thought of a ruse similar to that designed by Shēr Shāh in his campaign against Mal Dev of Jodhpur : 'It was commonly reported,' says our historian, 'that Aurangzeb craftily wrote a letter to Prince Muhammad Akbar and contrived that it should fall into the hands of the Rajputs. In it he praised the Prince for having won over the Rajputs, as he had been instructed, and that now he should crown his service by bringing them into a position where they would be under the fire of both armies (viz., Akbar's and Aurangzeb's). This letter was the cause of great divisions among them.' In fact the plot eminently succeeded, and Prince Akbar awoke one morning to find himself deserted by his allies. The Rajputs discovered the reality too late. 'For all the mighty force which Prince Akbar brought against his father, the sword was not drawn, and no battle was fought, but his army was completely broken. The Prince was soon informed that the Rajputs had abandoned him. There remained with him only Durgādās, two or three confidential officers of the Rāna, and a small force of two or three thousand horse. Of all his old servants and men, these alone remained. He lost all courage, self-reliance, and hope, and being utterly cast down, he took to flight..... Prince Muhammad Muazzam was ordered to pursue him.'

The rest of the story of Akbar may be very briefly told. He made his way, in spite of being hotly pursued, ultimately to the Court of Sambhāji at Raigarh in the South. There he was well received. Sambhāji 'came forth to receive him, gave him a house of his own to dwell in, about three *kos* from the fort of Raihri, and fixed an allowance for his support.' But Aurangzeb had issued orders to 'Khān-Jahān Bahādur, *Subadār* of the Dakhin, and to all the *faujdhārs*, directing them to stop him (Akbar) wherever he might come, to take him prisoner *alive if possible, if not, to kill him.*' When 'the report also came that an army had been sent under the command of Itikad Khān to effect the conquest of Rahiri, Prince

Muhammad Akbar.....thought it advisable to make his way as best as he could to Persia.' There he conceived the high ambition of invading India, as Humāyun had done before him, with Persian assistance. But at Garmsir in Khurāsān he died 'towards the close of the reign of Aurangzeb.'

*Peace with Mewar* : "Akbar's rebellion," as Prof. Sarkar has observed, "failed to change the sovereign of Delhi, but it brought unhopd for relief to the Mahārāṇa. It disconcerted the Mughal plan of war at a time when their net was being drawn closer round his State, and even his hill-refuge had been proved to be not invulnerable. Akbar's defection broke the cordon, and, by diverting all the untainted imperial troops into Mārṡwār, gave automatic relief to Mewar." The valiant Rāṇa Rāj Singh had in the meantime died (22 October, 1680) ; his successor, Jai Singh, was incapable of sustaining the struggle. Aurangzeb too now wanted to concentrate his attention in the South. Shivāji's death in April, 1680, had given rise to fresh hopes in that direction. The flight of Akbar (16 January, 1681) and the consequent pursuit had necessitated the diversion of the Imperial forces into the Deccan. Moreover, Sambhāji had provoked him by giving shelter to the fugitive Prince. So, all things pointed to the expediency of peace in the North. A welcome mediator was found in Shyām Singh of Bikāner who offered to hold the olive branch for either side.

Prince Muhammad Azam personally visited the Mahārāṇa on 14 June, 1681, near Rājsamudra, and the following terms were agreed upon between Mewar and the Empire :—

1. In lieu of the *jizya* demanded from Udaipur, the parganas of Mandal, Pur, and Bednor were to be permanently ceded to the Empire.
2. The Mughals were to withdraw all their forces from Mewar territory.

Jai Singh was recognised as Rāṇa, holding the rank of 5,000 horse in the Imperial peerage. Two months later Bhim Singh, the hero of Mewar, entered Mughal service, was invested with the dignity of a Rāja and posted at Ajmer, for the war with the Rāhtors continued till August, 1709.

*Mārṡwār continues the War* : This back-sliding of her ally did not affect the hostile attitude of Mārṡwār towards the Empire. For the Rāhtors there could be no peace until Ajit Singh was restored to the throne of his ancestors. Aurangzeb had, indeed, left for the South, but Mughal officers were still in charge of the state ; the army

of occupation was still an eyesore to Māroo. The war of independence, therefore, continued, until the death of Aurangzeb and the restoration of Ajit Singh. Three definite stages may be marked out in this protracted struggle : (1) From 1681-87 it was entirely a people's war—kingless, leaderless and desultory ; (2) 1687-1701 under Durgādās and Ajit Singh, who now assumed the leadership but could not, despite their victories, oust the Muslims from the sacred soil ; and (3) 1701-7 during which period after much bloodshed and many reverses on both sides, the Mughal policy of greed and aggression completely broke down, and Mārwār recovered her national ruling dynasty.

Ajit Singh was still an infant and in concealment ; and Durgādās was away in the Deccan. But the Rāhtors continued to fight against the Imperialists in much the same manner as the Netherlanders did against the Spaniards, or the Marathas against the Mughals after the death of Sambhāji. They took refuge in the hills and out of the way places, and as one of their own bards put it : ' An hour before sunset every gate of Māroo was shut. The Muslims held the strongholds, but the plains obeyed Ajit . . . The roads were now impassable.' Their guerilla methods rendered them irrepressible and at the same time ruinous to the army of occupation. Their deadliest tactics were to cut off the Mughal supplies.

The return of Durgādās from Mahārāstra, in 1687, gave a fillip to the Rāhtor war of independence. A valuable ally was also just then gained in Durjan Sāl Hada of Bundi who strengthened the national army with an addition of a thousand horse. Though the great Hada chief died soon after, the united Bundi and Mārwār forces succeeded in driving away most of the Mughal outposts, and also raided Imperial territory almost to the gates of Delhi. In 1690 Durgādās won a conspicuous victory over Safi Khān, the Governor of Ajmer. But in Shujaet Khān, the Viceroy of Gujarat, who was also now entrusted with the charge of Mārwār, the Rajputs found an adversary at once tough and subtle. With the help of the historian Ishwardās, a Nagar Brāhmaṇ who had served in Jodhpur as revenue officer, Shujaet Khān induced Durgādās to send away Akbar's daughter (his ward) to the Imperial Court (1694). It was then that the fanatical Aurangzeb was awakened to the spirit of Rajput chivalry in contrast to his own bigotry ; for Durgādās had not even neglected the education of his Muslim ward,—she had been enabled to learn the Muhammadan scriptures in the stronghold of the infidel ! But Akbar's son, Buland Akhtar was still in Durgādās's custody, and he was not restored until 1698, when Aurangzeb granted Ajit Singh the *parganas* of Jhalor, Sanchod, and Siwana as his *jagīr* with a *mansab* in the Imperial army. Though this might be looked upon as a humiliating compromise, it was highly expedient, and the two Rajput leaders only made use of it to gain time and opportunity for further advance. Durgādās himself was reward-

his way to the capital ; it is alleged, being poisoned at the Emperor's command.

Bijapur was no doubt saved for the time being. But the doomed city was a constant prey to rival factions. Afghans, Abyssinians and Deccani Mussalmans vied with the Marathas in maintaining anarchy in the State. For the next ten years the Mughals carried on their depredations within the Adil-Shāhi territory.

"Looking collectively at the Mughal gains in the Deccan during the first twenty years of Aurangzeb's reign," Sarkar observes, "we find that he had in 1657 annexed Kalyāṇi and Bidar in the north-eastern corner of the kingdom of Bijapur ; the fort and district of Parenda in the extreme north had been gained by bribery in 1660 ; Sholapur had been acquired by treaty in July 1668 ; and now Naldurg and Kulbarga were annexed. Thus, the vast tract of land enclosed by the Bhima and the Manjira eastwards up to an imaginary line joining Kulbarga to Bidar (77°E. longitude) passed into Mughal hands, and the imperial boundary on the south reached the north bank of the Bhima, opposite Halsangi, within striking distance of Bijapur city,—while south-eastwards it touched Malkhed, the fortress of the western border of the kingdom of Golkonda."

Āli Adil Shah II died on 24 November, 1672, and with him departed the glory of Bijapur. He was succeeded by his infant son Sikander, a boy of four, and a period of anarchy ensued, which ended only with the extinction of the dynasty and independence of the kingdom in 1686. The weakness and humiliation of Bijapur during this period are illustrated by the defection, to the Mughal camp, of 10,000 Bijapuris (Afghans, Deccani Musalmans and Marathas), and the compulsory submission of the Sultan's sister Shahar Bānu (Pādishāh Bibī) to the Mughal *harem*. The idol of her family and people alike, this Princess left the city of her birth, on 1 July, 1679, amidst the wailings of her near and dear ones, to enter the hated Sunni's seraglio.

Shivāji came to the rescue of distressed Bijapur with an army of 30,000 horse and provisions. He raided the Imperial territory between the Bhima and the Narmada, burning, slaying, and plundering on all sides. Dilir Khān, the Mughal general, despite great handicaps, retaliated with worse horrors in the Adil-Shāhi dominion. But Dilir Khān could effect no more than Jai Singh before him. On 23 February, 1680, he was recalled, utterly discomfited.

Prince Muazzam's viceroyalty had proved a failure. His place was taken by Prince Āzam to whom had been married the Bijapur

Princess above referred to. Aurangzeb wrote threatening letters to Sultan Sikander to make his submission and to allow the Mughal troops to march through his territory against the Marathas. But the Bijapur Prince answered these demands as the Belgians did the Kaiser at the commencement of the Great War (1914). The result was the utter devastation of Bijapur.

The desolation of the country all round and lack of supplies at first threatened the Mughal army with starvation. The price of corn rose at one time Rs. 15 a seer ! The army was in despair. But the courage and determination of Prince Āzam steeled them : " You have spoken for yourselves," he said to his officers. " Now listen to me. Muhammad Āzam with his two sons and Begam will not retreat from this post of danger so long as he has life. After my death, His Majesty may come and order my corpse to be removed for burial. You, my followers, may stay or go away as you like." The council of war then responded as Bābur's men had done before Kanua.

The siege of Bijapur began on 1 April 1685. It dragged on for 15 months, till June 1686, when Aurangzeb appeared in person. On Sunday, 12 September, 1686, the Adil-Shāhis capitulated. At one o'clock in the afternoon the proud Sikander Shāh, the last of the Adil Shāhs, went down before Aurangzeb in his camp in Rasūlpur. His subjects, with tears and lamentations, lined the streets of Bijapur as he marched past. He was well received, but shorn of his royal dignity. Sikander was enrolled in the Mughal peerage with the title of *Khān*, and given a pension of one *lakh* of rupees a year. The victorious Aurangzeb rested in the Sultan's palace for a few hours, rendered thanks to God for his triumph, and erased from its walls paintings drawn in violation of the Kuranic injunction not to vie with the Creator in depicting life. An inscription recording the victory was also put upon the famous cannon *Malik-i-maidān*. Desolation stared at the city of Bijapur after this. Even the water seemed to dry up in the springs. Plague followed war and swept away more than half its population. Sikander Sultan defeated, dethroned, imprisoned (in the fort of Daulatābad for some time), died near Sātāra on 3 April, 1700, hardly 32 years of age. According to his last wish, " his mortal remains were carried to Bijapur and there buried at the foot of the sepulchre of his spiritual guide Shaikh Fathimullah, in roofless enclosure."

*Fall of the Kutb-Shāhi* : The Kutb-Shāhi kingdom of Golkonda, though internally in no better condition than Bijapur, had helped the latter more than once in the hour of trial. So long as Aurangzeb was engrossed with the task of extinguishing the Adil-Shāhi, he thought it at least expedient to treat with Kutbu-l Mulk. But no sooner were his hands free, and strengthened by his conquest of Bijapur, than he turned his earnest attention towards the annexation of the other Shiah kingdom of the Deccan. In the eyes of Aurangzeb the worst offence of Kutb Shāh was his fraternising with infidels. Shivāji, after his flight from Agra, in 1666, had received effective help from Golkonda in recovering his forts from the Mughals. In 1677 he had been again rapturously received at Haidarābad and promised an annual subsidy of one *lakh* of *hūn* for the defence of his territory. Above all, the Brāhmaṇs Mādanna and Akanna had been allowed to dominate the entire administration. Prince Muazzam (Shāh Ālam) was sent against Kutb Shāh (Abul Hasan), and he succeeded by force and diplomacy in extorting from the latter submission on the following terms :—

*'A tribute of one krur and twenty lacs of rupees was to be paid in addition to the usual annual tribute... Mādanna and Akanna, the two brothers, and the chief cause of the war, were to be imprisoned and deprived of all authority. The fort of Siram and the pargana of Khir, and other districts which had been conquered, were to remain in the hands of the Imperialists, and Abul Hasan was to ask forgiveness for his offences from Aurangzeb.'*

While these negotiations were proceeding, 'some women of great influence in the *harem*, without the knowledge of Abul Hasan, laid a plot for the murder of Mādanna and Akanna . . . . Whilst the two doomed wretches were proceeding from the *darbār* to their houses, a party of slaves attacked them and killed them . . . Many Brāhmaṇs lost their lives and property on that day. The heads of the two brothers were cut off, and were sent to Prince Shāh Ālam by the hands of a discreet person.'

Shāh Ālam returned to Aurangzeb's camp at Sholapur on 7 June, 1686. Bijapur fell on 12 September, and on 28 January following (1687) the Emperor arrived within two miles of Golkonda.

The fort, surrounded with a strong granite wall over four miles in length and of great thickness, was further defended by 87 semi-circular bastions, 'each from 50 to 60 feet high and built of solid blocks of granite cemented together, some of them weighing more than a ton.' Within it were mansions of nobles, bazars, temples, mosques, soldiers' barracks, powder magazines, stables, and cultivated fields, and space enough to accom-

moderate the whole population of Haidarābad in times of danger. The whole was encircled by a deep ditch 50 feet broad.

Regular siege operations were commenced on 7 February, 1687. Aurangzeb's charge-sheet against the ruler of Golkonda was as follows :—

*'The evil deeds of this wicked man pass beyond the bounds of writing; but by mentioning one out of a hundred, and a little out of much, some conception of them may be formed. First, placing the reins of authority and government in the hands of vile tyrannical infidels; oppressing and afflicting the SAIYIDS, SHEIKHS, and other holy men; openly giving himself up to excessive debauchery and depravity; indulging in drunkenness and wickedness night and day; making no distinction between infidelity and Islam, tyranny and justice, depravity and devotion; waging obstinate war in defence of infidels; want of obedience to the Divine commands and prohibitions, especially to that command which forbids assistance to an enemy's country, the disregarding of which had cast a censure upon the Holy Book in the sight of both God and man. Letters full of friendly advice and warning upon these points had been repeatedly written, and had been sent by the hands of discreet men. No attention had been paid to them, moreover it had lately become known that a LAC of PAGODAS had been sent to the wicked Sambha. That in his insolence and worthlessness, no regard had been paid to the infamy of his deeds, and no hope shown of deliverance in this world or in the next.'*

Whatever the plea, Aurangzeb was determined to destroy Golkonda. So, when Prince Shāh Ālam showed inclinations to relent and intercede on behalf of Abul Hasan, he was ordered into the royal presence, his *mansabs* and *jagirs* were confiscated, and he was imprisoned. It was seven years before the Prince recovered his liberty.

'Day by day and week by week, the approaches (to the fort) were pushed forward under the direction of Ghāziu-d dīn Firūz Jang, but they were encountered with great daring by the besieged under the command of Sheikh Nizām, Mustafa Khān Lāri, otherwise called Abdūr Razzāk, and others. The fighting was desperate and many were killed on both sides

After one sharp encounter, in which a sally of the garrison was driven back with loss, Sheikh Minhaj, Sheikh Nizām, and others deserted Abul Hasan, and came over to the besiegers, when Aurangzeb granted to them suitable *mansabs* and *titles*.'

The siege continued for over eight months, the Mughals suffer-



ing heavy losses. Finally, when about 3 o'clock in the morning of 21 September, 1687, the Imperialists entered and captured the fort, it was treachery that decided the fate of Abul Hasan and not the military superiority of the Mughals. As Khāfi Khān puts it, 'Several times the valour of the assailants carried them to the top of the walls ; but the watchfulness of the besieged frustrated their efforts ; so they threw away their lives in vain, and the fortress remained untaken. But the fortune of Alamgīr at length prevailed ; after a siege of eight months and ten days, the place fell into his hands ; *but by good fortune, not by force of sword and spear.*'

If the account given by Khāfi Khān is true, the last king of Golkonda, whatever his other shortcomings, acted with composure and dignity in the hour of supreme misfortune.

'He went into his *harem* to comfort his women, to ask pardon of them, and take leave of them. Then, though his heart was sad, he controlled himself, and went to his reception room, and took his seat upon the *masnad* and watched for the coming of his unbidden guests. When the time for taking his meals arrived, he ordered the food to be served up. As Rahullah Khān and others arrived, he saluted them all, and never for a moment lost his dignity. With perfect self-control he received them with courtesy, and spoke to them with warmth and elegance. Abul Hasan called for his horse and accompanied the *amins*, carrying a great wealth of pearls upon his neck. When he was introduced into the presence of Prince Muhammad Āzam Shāh he took off his necklace of pearls and presented it to the Prince in a most graceful way. The Prince took it, and placing his hand upon his back, he did what he could to console and encourage him. He then conducted him to the presence of Aurangzeb, who also received him very courteously. After a few days the Emperor sent him to the fortress of Daulatābad and settled a suitable allowance for providing him with food, raiment and other necessities. The property of Abul Hasan which was recovered after its dispersion amounted to eight *lacs* and fifty-one thousand *hūns*, and two *kroirs*, and fifty three thousand rupees ; altogether, six *kroirs*, eighty *lacs* and ten thousand rupees, besides jewels, inlaid articles, and vessels of gold and silver. The total in *dāms* was one *arb.* fifteen *kroirs*, sixteen *lacs* and a fraction, which was the sum entered on the records

#### *Struggle with the Marathas :*

In hastening to tell of the fall of Bijapur (1686) and Golkonda (1687) we anticipated the history of half a century. During this period the seeds of a mighty power were sown, that was to prove fatal to the Empire whose history we have been tracing. Shāhji's capitulation, in 1636, before the joint force of Khān-zamān, the

Imperial officer, and Randaula Khān, the Bijapur commander, was indeed an act of expediency. This combination between the Empire and the Adil-Shāhi, as we have already seen, was not to last long. The Marātha-Shāhi that was to arise between these two powers was so placed geographically that it could successfully bargain with either to the final discomfiture of both. Shivāji, the embodiment of this new power, though he did not live to witness the destruction of Bijapur and Golkonda, had, while making use of both against the Mughals, so harassed them that their fall was only a question of time. The history of this period taken in all its phases is very complex and intriguing. But we shall narrate here only such parts of it as have a direct bearing on our principal theme. It would be convenient to study the Mughal-Maratha relations from the angle of Maratha leadership, which is the only way to avoid confusion. The rest of Maratha history is not relevant to our purpose.

*Shāhji* : The personal history of Shāhji, father of Shivāji, need not detain us long. Abdu-l Hamid Lahori introduces him to us in the following passage :—

‘Nizāmu-l Mulk was in confinement in the fort of Gwalior, but *evil-minded Shāhu, and other turbulent Nizāmu-l Mulks*, had found a boy of the Nizām’s family, to whom they gave the title of Nizāmu-l Mulk. They had got possession of some of the Nizām’s (Ahmednagar) territories, and were acting in opposition to the Imperial government. Now that the Emperor (Shāh Jahān) was near Daulatābad, he determined to send Khān-daurān, Khān-zamān, and Shayista Khān, at the head of three different divisions, to punish these rebels . . . The upshot of the whole campaign was that Shāhu finally submitted with the young Nizām ‘He agreed to enter the service of Adil Khān and the Imperial general. Accordingly the forts of Junnar, Trimbak, Tringalwāri, Haris, Judhan, Jund, and Harsiar, were delivered over to Khān-zamān . . . Randaūla, by the orders of Adil Khān, placed the young Nizām in the hands of Khān-zamān, and then went to Bijapur, accompanied by Shāhu.’

*Shivāji* : Shāhji’s estate at this time, held under the Adil Shāh, consisted of the Poona district, “from Chakan to Indāpur, Supa, Shirwal, Wai, and Jadgir, or a tract bounded on the west by the Ghats, on the north by the Ghod river, on the east by the Bhima and on the south by the Nira river.” This was the nursery, seed-bed or nucleus of Shivāji’s future power and greatness.

1646 was a year of crisis in the history of Bijapur : it was also the year of Shivāji’s opportunity. He seized Torṇā and its treasure of two *lacs* of *hūns*, and five miles east of it built a new fort called

Rājgarh. Further conquests in the Bijapur territory followed, leading to Shāhji's imprisonment as a hostage. Shivāji in his dilemma approached the Mughal prince Murād Bakhsh to secure the release of his father. There was some diplomatic correspondence between prince Murād and Shivāji on the matter, in the course of the year 1649. Through whatever agency, Shāhji was released at the end of that year, and Shivāji kept quiet till 1655. During the latter year he captured Jāvli from the Morés, which considerably added to his power. "The annexation of Jāvli" says Sarkar "not only opened to Shivāji a door for the conquest of the south and the west, but brought a very important accession to his strength, in the form of many thousands of Mavle infantrymen from among the subjects and former retainers of Chandra Rao. In short, his recruiting ground for these excellent fighters along the Sahyādri range, was now doubled. The Morés had accumulated a vast treasure in eight generations of undisturbed and expanding rule and the whole of it fell into Shivāji's hands."

Shivāji's activities are thus characterised by the hostile historian Khāfi Khān :

'He was distinguished in his tribe for courage and intelligence ; and for craft and trickery he was reckoned a sharp son of the devil , the father of fraud. In that country, where all the hills rise to the sky, and the jungles are full of trees and bushes, he had an inaccessible abode . . . Adil Khān of Bijapur was attacked by sickness, under which he suffered for a long time, and great confusion arose in his territory Shivāji seeing his country left without a ruler, boldly and wickedly stepped in and seized it, with the possessions of some other *jagirdārs*. This was the beginning of that system of violence which he and his descendants have spread over the rest of the Konkan and all the territory of the Dakhin . . . He assembled a large force of Maratha robbers and plunderers, and set about reducing fortresses . Evil days fell upon the kingdom of Bijapur in the time of Sikander Alī Adil Khān II, whose legitimacy was questioned, and who ruled when a minor as the *locum tenens* of his father. The operations of Aurangzeb against that country when he was a Prince in the reign of his father, brought great evil upon the country, and other troubles also arose. Shivāji day by day increased his strength, and reduced all the forts of the country, so that in course of time he became a man of power and means . He built several forts also in those parts, so that altogether he had forty forts all of which were well supplied with provisions and munitions of war. Boldly raising his standard of rebellion, he became the most noted rebel of the Dakhin.'

Nevertheless, the same sharp critic does not fail to add, 'But

*he made it a rule that wherever his followers went plundering, they should do no harm to the mosques, the Book of God, or the women of any one. Whenever a copy of the sacred Kuran came into his hands, he treated it with respect, and gave it to some of his Musulman followers. When the women of any Hindu or Muhammadan were taken prisoners by his men, and they had no friend to protect them, he watched over them until the relations came with suitable ransom to buy their liberty.'*

Shivāji for a long time kept peace with the Mughals, either because he did not feel strong enough to antagonise the Empire and Bijapur at the same time, or because of the vigilance of Aurangzeb's viceroyalty of the Deccan. When, however, on the death of Muhammad Adil Shāh (4 November 1656), Aurangzeb began to mobilise for an attack on Bijapur, Shivāji offered to join the Imperialists on certain terms; evidently the legalisation of his usurpations in Bijapur territory. But Aurangzeb temporised, and, when the war broke out, Bijapur won over Shivāji to its own side

In March 1657, two of Shivāji's Maratha officers raided the Mughal territory and "carried devastation and alarm to the very gates of Ahmednagar, the most notable city in Mughal Deccan," while Shivāji himself stole into Junnar city, slaughtered the guards, and carried off 300,000 *hūns*, 200 horses, besides jewellery and rich clothing. Aurangzeb sent Nasiri Khān after Shivāji, ordering him to "pursue the Marathas and extirpate them." The vigorous measures that were being taken were interrupted, first by the rainy season, and then by the War of Succession, occasioned by Shāh Jahān's illness in September 1657. Bijapur made peace with Aurangzeb before he left for the north, and Shivāji also followed suit. In reply to Shivāji's embassy, Aurangzeb wrote diplomatically: "Though your offences do not deserve pardon, I forgive you as you have repented. You propose that if you are granted all the villages belonging to your home (i.e., Shāhji's old *jagir*) together with the forts and territory of Konkan, after the Imperialists have seized the old Nizām-Shāhi territory now in the charge of Adil Shāh,—you will send Sona Pandit as your envoy to my Court and a contingent of 500 horse under one of your officers to serve me, and you will protect the Imperial frontiers. You are called upon to send Sonāji, and your prayers will be granted." At the same time he wrote to Mir Jumla and Adil Shāh: "Attend to it, as *the son of a dog* (meaning Shivāji)

is waiting for his opportunity." Pedgaon was also fortified as a base of operations against Poona. But the Succession War in 1658-59 gave Shivāji the needed respite, so far as the Mughals were concerned. It was during this period that the murder of Afzul Khān, the Bijapuri general sent against Shivāji, took place at Prātāgarh. The controversy that has raged round this incident need not distract us here. Our next incident is that relating to Shayista Khān.

Greatly encouraged by his triumph over Afzul Khān, Shivāji continued his activities on all sides. Aurangzeb after his second coronation (July, 1659) had appointed his uncle Shayista Khān viceroy of the Deccan. He now directed him to punish Shivāji and put him down. '*Amiru-l umra* (Shayista Khān),' according to Khāfi Khān, 'marched in accordance with these orders, from Aurangābad at the end of January, 1660 A. D., and marched towards Pūna and Chākna, which in those days were Shivāji's places of abode and security.' At the same time, Siddi Jauhār (now made Salābat Khān) launched another offensive on behalf of Bijapur from the south against Shivāji, and invested Panhāla (May, 1660). Though Jauhār proved 'both fool and traitor' in letting Shivāji escape from Panhāla, another Bijapur force followed up and took Panhāla 'in a twinkling.' It was in the course of this flight of Shivāji from Panhāla to Visālgarh that the brave Bāji Prabhu (*Deshpande of Hardis māval*) fought his heroic rear-guard action at the Thermopylæ of Mahārāshtra and died with his brave hundred ! Where,

'Death clamoured, and tall figures strewed the ground  
Like trees in a cyclone.'

Shayista Khān, too, relentlessly pursued his campaign. But, 'the daring freebooter Shivāji ordered his followers to attack and plunder the baggage of *Amiru-l umra's* army wherever they met with it. When the *Amir* was informed of this he appointed 4000 horse, under experienced officers, to protect the baggage. But every day, and in every march, Shivāji's Dakhinis swarmed round the baggage, and falling suddenly upon it like Cossacks, they carried off horses, camels, men, and whatever they could secure, until they became aware of the approach of the troops. The Imperial forces pursued them, and harassed them, so that they lost courage, and giving up fighting for flight, they dispersed. At length they reached Pūnā and Sivapūr, two places built by that *dog* (*Shivāji*). The imperial forces took both these places and held them.'

The next great fortress to be captured after a great struggle was Chākna (August 1660) which was of considerable strategic importance

to the Mughals as covering the retreat to Ahmednagar. Then followed desultory warfare during the years 1661-63, ending with the famous *coup* of Shivāji on Shayista Khān's camp in Poona on 5 April, 1663. On this occasion, says Prof. Sarkar, "Shivāji dealt a masterly blow at the Mughals,—a blow whose cleverness of design, neatness of execution and completeness of success created in the Mughal Court and camp as much terror of his prowess and belief in his possession of magical powers, as his *coup* against Afzul Khān had done among the Bijapuris. He surprised and wounded the Mughal viceroy of the Deccan in the heart of his camp, in his very bed-chamber, within the inner ring of his body-guards and female slaves." The details of this incident are only of legendary interest. The curious reader may find the Muslim account in Khāfi Khān's narrative and the Maratha version in the Sabhāsad or Chitnis *bakhar*. But there is one aspect of it which is worthy of being pointed out here, viz., the part played by Rāja Jaswant Singh.

Cosme da Guarda, a Portuguese biographer of Shivāji, who wrote his account in 1695, states : 'Jassomptissinga was a Gentio. Sevagy took advantage of this (fact) for he was a (Hindu)' and sent him one night a rich present of precious stones, a large quantity of gold and silver with many rich and precious jewels. With these marvellous cannons Sevagy fought and reduced that fortress. The message was as follows. "Though Your Highness has the greatness of a Sovereign King and (now) also that of the General of so powerful an Emperor, if you recollect that I am a Gentio like you, and if you take account of what I have done, you will find that all I have done, was due to the zeal for the honour and worship of your gods whose temples have been destroyed everywhere by the Mouros. If the cause of religion have precedence over all the gods of the world and even over life itself, I have for the same cause risked mine so many times. I offer you in the name of the gods themselves these trifles. I do not ignore that [a person of] your high caste has, for honour and loyalty, to defend those whose salt and water you eat and drink. I know, moreover, that you hold the *jaguir* of the Great Mogol and cannot, on that account, take the side of another, *but you may so behave that you will not fail in the loyalty professed by your illustrious family (sangué) or in the respect due to your gods that I may mix with the people of Sextaghan, to be able to do so as I like (para ser senhor das accens), and to do to him, without the knowledge of the Mouros, what I can.*"

'Jassomptissinga was less devout and more ambitious and so did not attend to these scruples, he was much obliged for the presents and still more for the promises for which *he confederated with Sevagy promising not to obstruct his cause and even to connive at what he might design against the Mouros.*'

The European version of the Shayista Khān incident is contained in the sequel to the above passage (pages 66-70). 'When this occurrence,' says Khāfi Khān, 'was reported to the Emperor, he passed censure both upon the *Amir* and Rāja Jaswant. The *Subadāri* of the Dakhin and the command of the forces employed against Sivāji was given to Prince Muhammad Mu'azzam. The *Amiru-l-umra* was recalled, but a subsequent order (1st December, 1663) sent him to be *Subadār* of Bengal. Mahārāja Jaswant was continued as before among the auxiliary forces under the Prince.' Does this acquit Jaswant Singh?

During the period of the change of viceroys and commanders, Shivāji indulged in another adventure, viz., a raid on Surat, 'the greatest emporium of the Orient and the richest jewel of the Mogol'. His object in doing this was, according to da Guarda, 'to plunder the riches of the wealthiest city of the east to show Sextaghan and the Mogol how little he thought of their power and army.' The same writer tells us, 'some confused news of his intention reached Surrate but caused a great laughter as hundred and eighty thousand cavalry were encamped in the very territories of which Sevagy had become master.' The Maratha, however, entered like 'a furious tiger in a herd of cows.'

'There was such a confusion in the city among the Mouros, Baneanes, Guzarates, and all other Hindus as will not be easy to describe. Men, women, and children ran naked without knowing where and to whom. *But no one was in the peril of life, for it was the strict order of Sevagy that unless resistance was offered no one should be killed, and as none resisted none perished.* Sevagy's men then entered the houses and slighting the richest silk and silver coins, took only rupies of gold, each of which was worth sixteen of silver. Neither the quantity of money he got nor the speed with which it was conveyed by 900 bullocks is credible.'

M. de Thevenot, however, observes, 'Sevagy's Men entered the Town and plundered it for the space of four days burning several Houses.' The Mughal governor of Surat, Ināyet Khān, shut himself up in the fort, and 'the governor's men continued to fire all night long, *but more damage was done to the town than the enemy.* Everything of beauty existing in Surat was that day reduced to ashes and many considerable merchants lost all that the enemy had not plundered, through this terrible fire, narrowly escaping with their lives. Two or three Bania merchants lost several millions and the total loss was estimated at 30 millions (Sevagy) departed at the first gleam of daylight, delighted to have plucked such a fine feather from Aurangzeb's tail.'

'The Governor of Surrate reported the above-mentioned incident to

the Great Mogal in such a manner that when it was read and heard it seemed worse than it (actually) was. As the advantage the Great Mogal derives from Surrate, was enormous, and the Governor had informed him that all was lost and the merchants were arranging for a change of place on account of the scant security of Surrate, he resolved to remedy everything by sending an army that would totally destroy Sevagy and detain the merchants. He ordered that they should be excused duties for three years(?) during which period nothing should be paid for import or export. This appeased and relieved all, for it was a very great favour in view of the large capital employed by those Gentios in the trade. The wealth of these people is so great that when the Great Mogal sent for a loan of four millions to Baneane Duracandas Vorase, he answered that His Majesty should name the Coin and the sum would immediately be paid in it. There are in Surrate the following coins - rupias, half and quarter (rupias) of gold, the same of silver. There are pagodas of gold and *larins* of silver, and in any of these eight (coins) he offered to render four millions. *What is still more surprising is that the major part of the Baneanes capital was invested at Surrate and this (offer) was (made) four years after the sack by Sevagy.* So much had already been accumulated and so considerable had been the profit of those three years when no tax was paid. *The Mogal usually repays such loans with the taxes, and it is done with such punctuality that he gets for the mere asking whatever sums he wants, for the subjects deliver their purses in accordance with the degree of satisfaction that they get from the kings.'*

In a letter to the Director of the Dutch East India Company, dated 4th August, 1664, their Governor-General states - 'King Orangech has ordered the town of Surat to be surrounded by a stone wall and has granted a year's exemption of tolls and duties to the merchants, the Company and the English being also included. This exemption was to begin from March 16th, 1663, and we calculate that the Company will then gain a sum of f. 50,000 (£4,200) so that *this catastrophe has brought us profit.*'

The Governor Ināyet Khān was replaced by Giasu-d din Khān. Shivāji had arrived in Surat at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, 6th January 1661, he left the place at 10 a.m. on Sunday, the 10th. 'Thursday and Friday nights,' says one account, 'were the most terrible nights for fire. The fire turned the night into day, as before the smoke in the day-time had turned day into night rising so thick that it darkened the sun like a great cloud.'

*Treaty of Purandhar :* These activities of Shivāji alarmed Aurangzeb who at once despatched abler generals to tackle with him. Khāfi Khān writes, 'Despatches arrived from Prince Muazzam to the effect that Shivāji was growing more and more daring, and every day was attacking and plundering the imperial territories and caravans. He had seized the ports of Jiwal, Pabal and others near Surat, and attacked the pilgrims bound to



Mecca. He had built several forts by the sea-shore, and had entirely interrupted maritime intercourse. He had also struck copper coins (*sika-i-pul*) and *hūns* in the fort of *Rājgarh*. Mahārāja Jaswant had endeavoured to suppress him, but without avail. Rāja Jai Singh (and Dilir Khān) were sent to join the armies fighting against him.'

This was indeed hard time for Shivāji, for both Jai Singh\* and Dilir Khān were veteran generals and had come with an iron determination to subdue him. Jai Singh organised a whirlwind campaign so as to encompass Shivāji from every possible quarter. In this he tried to secure the co-operation of Adil Shāh, the Europeans on the west-coast, the petty *rājas* and *zamindars* and the Siddis, and also tried to corrupt Shivāji's supporters. The heart and centre of this mammoth design was to capture Purandhar where Shivāji happened to be at this time.

'When he (Jai Singh) arrived there,' writes Cosme da Guarda, 'even Sevagy could not help being frightened, for besides the 400,000 cavalry, the number of men and animals that followed these (Mughal) armies, could neither be credited nor ascertained. There went with it 500 elephants, 3 million camels, 10 million oxen of burden, men of useless service and merchants without number. The first thing that Sevagy did was to tempt this general in the same way as he had done in the case of the other. He sent him a very large and very valuable present desiring his friendship. The Rāya refused both and ordered to inform Sevagy that he had not come to receive presents but to subdue him, and for (his own) good he asked him to yield and avoid many deaths, or he would make him yield

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\* "Jai Singh's career," writes Sarkar, "had been one of undimmed brilliancy, from the day when he, an orphan of twelve [now he was 60], received his first appointment in the Mughal army (1617). Since then he had fought under the imperial banner in every part of the empire, from Balkh in Central Asia to Bijapur in the Deccan, from Qandahār in the west to Mungir in the east. In diplomacy he had attained to a success surpassing even his victories in the field. Wherever there was a difficult or delicate work to be done, the Emperor had only to turn to Jai Singh. A man of infinite tact and patience, an adept in the ceremonious courtesy of the Muslims, a master of Turki and Persian, besides Urdu and the Rajput dialect, he was an ideal leader of the composite army of Afghans and Turks, Rajputs and Hindusthanis, that followed the crescent banner of the sovereign of Delhi. His foresight and political cunning, his smoothness of tongue and cool calculating policy, were in striking contrast with the impulsive generosity, reckless daring, blunt straight-forwardness, and impolitic chivalry which we are apt to associate with the Rajput character."—*Shivāji*, pp. 112-13.

by force. The resolution perturbed Sevagy.' The siege went on, and Guarda continues, 'the Rāya had brought with him a large number of heavy artillery of such a calibre that each cannon was drawn by forty yokes of oxen, but they were of no use for bombarding a fortress of this kind ; for it was not a handiwork of man, but of the author of Nature (God), and (because) it also had foundations so (strongly) laid and fortified that they laughed at balls, wind, and even the thunderbolts. The plain at the top, where the men communed with the stars, was more than half a league in breadth, provided with food for many years and the most copious water that, after regaling men, was precipitated through the hill to fertilise the plants with which it was covered'

It was in the defence of this fort that Murār Bāji, another heroic captain of Shivāji, to be remembered with Bāji Prabhu and Tānāji Mālusre, laid down his life together with three hundred lion-hearted Māvlas. The garrison, says Sarkar, "with a courage worthy of the mother of Brasidas, the Spartan, continued the struggle, undismayed by their leader's fall and saying, 'What though one man Murār Bāji is dead ? We are as brave as he, and we shall fight with the same courage !' (*Sabhasad*, 43-44 ; T. S. )."

But the struggle was in vain. Consequently, in the words of Khāfi Khān,

Shivāji 'sent some intelligent men to Rāja Jai Singh, begging forgiveness for his offences, promising the surrender of several forts which he still held and proposing to pay a visit to the Rāja. But the Rāja knowing well his craft and falsehood, gave directions for pressing the attack more vigorously, until the intelligence was brought that Shivāji had come out of the fortress. Some confidential Brāhman now came from him and confirmed his expressions of submission and repentance with the most stringent oaths. It was finally settled that out of the thirty-five forts which he possessed, the keys of twenty-three should be given up, with their revenues, amounting to ten *lacs* of *hūns*, or forty *lacs* of rupees. Twelve small forts, with moderate revenues, were to remain in the possession of Sivāji's people. Sambhā, his son, a boy of eight years old, in whose name a *mansab* of 5000 had been granted at Rāja Jai Singh's suggestion, was to proceed to Court with the Rāja, attended by a suitable retinue. Sivāji himself, with his family, was to remain in the hills, and endeavour to restore the prosperity of his ravaged country. Whenever he was summoned on Imperial service, he was to attend. On his being allowed to depart, he received a robe, horse, etc.'

In addition to the above terms, Shivāji further engaged : 'If lands yielding 4 *lacs* of *hūns* a year in the lowlands of Konkan and 5 *lacs* of *hūns* a year in the uplands (Bālāghāt Bijāpuri), are granted to me by the Emperor and I am assured by an Imperial *fīrmān*

that the possession of these lands will be confirmed in me after the expected Mughal conquest of Bijāpur, then I agree to pay to the *Emperor* 40 lacs of *hūns* in 13 yearly instalments.' These lands were to be wrested from Bijapur by Shivāji himself, and Sarkar observes, "Here we detect the shrewdness of Jai Singh's policy in throwing a bone of perpetual contention between Shivāji and the Sultans of Bijapur. As he wrote to the Emperor, 'This policy will result in a threefold gain : *first*, we get 40 lacs of *hūns* or 2 *krors* of Rupees ; *secondly*, Shivāji will be alienated from Bijapur ; *thirdly*, the imperial army will be relieved from the arduous task of campaigning in these two broken and jungly regions as Shiva will himself undertake the task of expelling the Bijapuri garrison from them.' In return for it, Shivāji also agreed to assist the Mughals in the invasion of Bijapur with 2,000 cavalry of his son Shambhāji's *mansab* and 7,000 expert infantry under his own command."

This splendid achievement was accomplished by Jai Singh in less than three months. In the Bijapur campaign of Jai Singh, which we have already described, Shivāji faithfully carried out his promises. Yet, distrustful of the wily Maratha chief, Jai Singh wrote to the Emperor, "Now that Adil Shāh and Qutb Shāh have united in mischief, it is necessary to win Shiva's heart by all means and to *send him to Northern India* to have audience of your Majesty."

To cut a long story short, after much diplomatic discussion and most solemn assurances on the part of Jai Singh as to his safety and honour, Shivāji set out for Agra, to the Imperial Court. His disappointment there and his romantic escape are familiar to every school-boy in India. There are several versions of the details, but the following account given by Khāfi Khān ought to serve our purpose :—

'After giving Sivāji every assurance of a kind and gracious reception, he (Jai Singh) made himself responsible for his safety, and sent him to Court. News of Sivāji's arrival was brought as the festival of the accession (9th year of the reign, 1666 A. D.) was being celebrated. It was ordered that Kunwar Rām Singh, son of Rāja Jai Singh, with Mukhlis Khān, should go out to meet and conduct *that evil malicious fellow* to Agra. On the 18th Zi-l kada, 1076, Shivāji, and his son of nine years age, had the honour of being introduced to the Emperor. He made an offering of 500 *ashrafis* and 6000 rupees, altogether 30,000 rupees. By

the royal command he was placed in the position of a *panj-hazāri*. Rāja Jai Singh had flattered Sivāji with promises; but as the Rāja knew the Emperor to have a strong feeling against Sivāji, he artfully refrained from making known the hopes he had held out. The *istikbal*, or reception of Sivāji, had not been such as he expected. He was annoyed, and so, before the robe and jewels and elephant, which were ready for presentation to him, could be presented, he complained to Rām Singh that he was disappointed. The Kunwar tried to pacify him, but without effect. When his disrespectful bearing came to the knowledge of the Emperor, he was dismissed with little ceremony, without receiving any mark of the Imperial bounty, and was taken to a house outside the city near to the house of Rāja Jai Singh, as had been arranged by Kunwar Rām Singh. A letter was sent to Rāja Jai Singh, informing him of what had passed, and Sivāji was forbidden to come to the Royal presence until the Rāja's answer and advice should arrive. His son was ordered to attend the presence in the company of Rām Singh.

Shivāji then effected his escape and after various adventures returned to the South via Mathura, Allahābad, Benares, and Telin-gana. The alarm was raised too late at Agra, and even then the Imperial sentinels were too tardy of motion. 'The *kotwāl* and Kun-war Rām Singh were censured, and as Rām Singh was suspected of having prompted the evasion, he was deprived of his *mansab* and forbidden to come to Court. Orders were sent to the provincial governors, and to the officials in all directions, to search for Shivāji, and to seize him and send him to the Emperor. Rāja Jai Singh, who just at this time had retired from Bijapur, and had arrived at Aurangābad, received orders. . . . . *to watch carefully for the bird escaped from the cage, and not suffer him to re-establish himself in his old haunts and to gather his followers around him.*' But the old Rajput general was completely baffled; he was recalled in May 1667, and died on the 2nd July following, at Burhānpur on his way to the capital.

The return of Prince Muazzam, as viceroy of the Deccan, together with Jaswant Singh, gave Shivāji the opportunity he needed. Though the Mughal arms were strengthened with the joining of Dilir Khān, in October 1667, Shivāji soon retrieved his lost position. The Empire being threatened in the North-West at the same time (1667), and the Imperial officers in the Deccan quarrelling among themselves, a peace was patched up with the Marathas (9 March 1668) which lasted for two years. Shivāji's title of *Rāja* was recognised by the Emperor, and the English factory records of the time speak of the

"great tranquillity," "Shivāji being very quiet, not offering to molest the king's country." Sambhāji was again created a *mansabdār* of 5000, and was sent to the viceroy's Court of Aurangābad with a contingent of 1000 horse. It was during this period (1667-69) that Shivāji laid the foundations of his government, broad and deep, to the admiration of after ages.

On the ostensible ground of Aurangzeb's campaign of temple destruction in 1669, Shivāji launched his offensive once again, about the close of that year or the beginning of the next. One of the great exploits of this campaign was the capture of Kondāṇa (thenceforward called Simhagarh) by the brave Tānāji Mālusre. While Shivāji was thus conquering, reconquering and consolidating, Prince Muazzam and Dilir Khān were again quarrelling and recriminating each other. In March 1670, consequently, the English factors at Surat wrote, "Shivāji marches now not [as] before as a thief, but in gross with an army of 30,000 men, conquering as he goes, and is not disturbed though the Prince lies near him."

On 3 October 1670 Shivāji for a second time plundered Surat. The incidents of the previous raid repeated themselves in the course of three days. Property worth about 132 *lakhs* of rupees was carried away, and Surat remained in continuous dread of the Marathas until 1679. "But the real loss of Surat," observes Sarkar, "was not to be estimated by the booty which the Marathas carried off. The trade of this, the richest port of India, was practically destroyed . . . . Business was effectually scared away from Surat, and inland producers hesitated to send their goods to this the greatest emporium of Western India."

The rest of Shivāji's relations with the Mughals may be briefly enumerated. Between the years 1671-72, in addition to the recovery of most of the territory ceded by the treaty of Purandhar (1665), the Marathas annexed Baglana (north of Nasik district), and the Koli country (Jawhar and Rāmnagar or Dharampūr), between Surat and Thāna. In 1673 Panhāla was annexed, and Kolhāpūr and Ponda in 1675. By this time Shivāji had also got himself crowned (1674) at Rāigarh by which he at once elevated himself from being a mere rebel or free-booter to the status of a crowned monarch.

During the last six years of his life (1674-80) Shivāji's conquests were mainly confined to the lands south of the limits already

named. They comprised the southern division of Shivāji's *swarājya* (consisting of the Konkan south of Bombay, Sāvantavādi and the North Kanara coast, the Karnātak districts of Belgaum and Dhārwar to Kopal west of the Tungabhadra river, and lastly portions of Mysore, Bellary, Chittur, and Arcot districts up to Vellore and Jinji); the northern division consisting of the *Dang* and Baglana, the Koli country south of Surat, Konkan north of Bombay, and the Deccan plateau or *Desh* southwards to Poona, and the Sātāra and Kolhāpūr districts. "Outside these settled or half-settled parts of his kingdom there was a wide and very fluctuating belt of land subject to his power but not owning his sovereignty. They were the adjacent parts of the Mughal Empire (*Mughlāi* in Marāthi), which formed the happy hunting-ground of his horsemen," and whence he levied *chauth*.

*Sambhāji* : Shivāji died on 4 April 1680.\* This event followed by the escape of the rebellious Prince Akbar into the Deccan, decided Aurangzeb to come to the South, where he was destined to spend the remaining twenty-seven years of his life. Shivāji was succeeded by his reckless son Sambhāji, who though brave like his father, was profligate to a degree. This prince, before his barbarous execution in 1689, followed the strategy of the great Maratha, and harried and plundered the Mughal territories in the Deccan.

i. 'When Shivāji was dead,' writes Khāfi Khān, 'his wretched son Sambha desired to surpass his father. He raised the standard of rebellion,

\* He was barely 53 years of age at that time. "Shivāji's real greatness," observes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "lay in his character and ability, rather than in the originality of conception or length of political vision. Unfailing insight into the character of others, efficiency of arrangements, and instinctive perception of what was practicable and most profitable under the circumstances (*tact des choses possibles*) - these were the causes of his success in life. The imperishable achievement of his life was the welding of the scattered Marathas into a nation, and his most precious legacy was the spirit that he breathed into his people. And he achieved this in the teeth of the opposition of four mighty Powers like the Mughal empire, Bijapur, Portuguese India, and the Abyssinians of Janjira. No other Hindu has shown such constructive genius in modern times. He has proved by his example that the Hindu race can build a nation, found a state, defeat enemies; they can conduct their own defence; they can protect and promote literature and art, commerce and industry; they can maintain navies and ocean-trading fleets of their own, and conduct naval battles on equal terms with foreigners. He taught the modern Hindus to rise to the full stature of their growth.' (*Short History of Aurangzeb*, p. 240.)

and on the 20th Muharram, in the twenty-third year of the reign, corresponding with 1091 A. H. (15 February 1680), he attacked Kakar Khān, who acted as collector of the *zīya* under Khān-zamān, the Subadār of the Dakhin.....he fell upon Bahādurpūr, one *kos* and half from Burhānpur. This place was rich, and there were many bankers and merchants in it. Jewels, money, and goods from all parts of the world were found there in vast abundance. He surrounded and attacked this place, and his attack was so sudden and unexpected, .. that no one was able to save a *dām* or a *dīram* of his property, or a single one of his wives and children. Seventeen other places of note, such as Hasanpura, etc., in the neighbourhood of the city, all wealthy and flourishing places, were plundered and burnt.'

ii. When Prince Muhammad Akbar sought shelter in the Deccan (1680) he found his way to Rāhiri (Rāigarh), the capital of Sambhāji. 'This chieftain,' says Khāfi Khān, 'came to receive him, gave him a house of his own to dwell in, about three *kos* from the fort of Rāhiri, and fixed an allowance for his support.' This, as we have seen already, drew down the might of the Empire upon him, and Akbar finally escaped to Persia.

iii. In the final campaign of Aurangzeb against Golkonda (1685-6), readers will remember that, among the Imperial charges against Abul Hasan, it was also stated: 'moreover it had lately become known that a *lac* of *pagodas* had been sent to the wicked Sambha.'

iv. All these were sufficient grievances for Aurangzeb to organise his forces to crush Sambhāji. So, 'Prince Muhammad Azam Shāh was sent in the 34th year of the reign, 1101 A.H. and some experienced *amirs* to punish the infidels. To cut a long story short, the intrepid Mukarrab Khān proved eminently successful.

Sambhāji, and all his friends and family, were taken prisoners to the Emperor. The degree of rejoicing that accompanied this event may be fairly taken as the measure of the Imperial satisfaction at the triumphant termination of Aurangzeb's long drawn out struggle with Shivāji and his son.

'It is said that during the four or five days when Mukarrab Khān was known to be coming with his prisoners, the rejoicings were so great among all classes, from chaste matrons to miserable men, that they could not sleep at night, and they went out two *kos* to meet the prisoners, and gave expression to their satisfaction. In every town and village on the road or near it wherever the news reached, there was great delight; and wherever they passed, the doors and roofs were full of men and women, who looked on rejoicing .. (So the Imperial historian.)

'After they had been sent to their places of confinement, some of the councillors of the state advised that their lives should be spared, and that they should be kept in perpetual confinement, on

condition of surrendering the keys of the fortresses held by Sambhā . . . .the Emperor was in favour of seizing the opportunity of getting rid of these prime movers of the strife, and hoped that with a little exertion their fortresses would be reduced. He therefore rejected the advice, and would not consent to spare them on condition of receiving the keys of the fortresses. He gave orders that the tongues of both should be torn out. Then, with ten or eleven other persons, they were to be put to death with a variety of tortures, and lastly he ordered that the skins of the heads of Sambhā and Kabkalas should be stuffed with straw, and exposed in all the cities and towns of the Dakhin, with beat of drum and sound of trumpet. Such is the retribution for rebellious, violent, oppressive evil-doers. Sāhu, the son of Sambhā, a boy eleven years of age, was spared, and orders were given for his being within the limits of the palace. Suitable teachers were appointed to educate him, and a *mansab* of 7,000 was granted to him. . . . .Some women, including the mother and daughters of Sambhā, were sent to the fortress of Daulatābad.' (Khāfi Khān).

*Rājārām* : Sambhāji's tragedy was the outcome of his own impolicy and ineptitude. As Sarkar has well observed, "While Aurangzeb was directing the full strength of his empire against Bijapur and Golkonda, Shambhuji made no adequate effort to meet the danger that threatened all the Daccani Powers alike. His soldiers plundered places in the Mughal territory as a matter of routine, but these raids did not influence the military situation. Aurangzeb disregarded such pin-pricks. The Maratha king was not wise enough to follow any large and well-thought-out plan for diverting the Mughals from the sieges of Bijapur (1686) and Golkonda (1687) and averting their fall ; his Government was also hopelessly weakened by rebellions among his vassals and plots among his courtiers."

The weakness of hereditary monarchy, in an unsettled country with no defined principles of succession, had been demonstrated in Mahārāshtra as well, immediately after Shivāji's death. Rājārām, a lad of ten years (the younger son of Shivāji by another wife), had been preferred by some of the nobility to his profligate elder step-brother Sambhāji. But within a short time Sambhāji came into his own, with the results we have witnessed. Aurangzeb found hardly any respite even after the execution of Sambhāji. Rājārām immediately stepped into the shoes of his deceased step-brother. 'Mes-



sengers now brought to the knowledge of the Emperor,' writes Khāfi Khān, 'that the forces of Rām Rāja (as he calls Rājārām) had marched in various directions to ravage the territories and reduce the forts belonging to the Imperial throne.'

The wearisome campaigning of the next ten years may be only very briefly told here. "The years 1688 and 1689 were a period of unbroken triumph to the Emperor. His armies took possession of the forts and provinces of the annexed kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkonda, e. g., Sāgar (the Berad capital), Raichur and Adoni (in the east), Sera and Bangalore (in Mysore), Wandewash and Conjeveram (in the Madras) Karnātak, Bankapur and Belgaum (in the extreme south-west), besides Raigarh (the capital) and many other Maratha forts. In Northern India, too, signal success attended his arms: the Jāt rising under Rājārām was put down and that leader was slain (on 4th July, 1688)."

The Marathas were past-masters in strategy. Rājārām, under the advice of his minister (*Amātya*) Rāmachandra Nilkantha Bāvdekar, escaped to Jinji in order to divide the Imperial forces by creating a diversion in the eastern Karnātak. In the Maratha dominions nearer home the *Amātya* himself was appointed Dictator (*Hakumatpanah*) with his headquarters at Vishālgarh. Between these two fronts the Mughal forces were frittered away. "The difficulties of Aurangzēb," observes Sarkar, "were only multiplied by the disappearance of a common head and a central government among the Marathas, as every Maratha captain with his own retainers fought and raided in a different quarter and on his own account. It now became a people's war, and Aurangzeb could not end it, because there was no Maratha government or State army for him to attack and destroy." "It was no longer a simple military problem, but had become a trial of endurance and resources between the Mughal empire and the indigenous people of the Deccan."

The first reverse for the Imperialists came in May 1690 when the Mughal general Rustam Khān was captured and his camp looted by the Marathas. This was the achievement of the Maratha general Santāji Ghorpade.

'Every one who encountered him,' says Khāfi Khān, 'was either killed or wounded and made prisoner; or if any one did escape, it was with his mere life, with the loss of his army and baggage. Nothing could be done, for wherever *the accursed dog* went and threatened an attack, there was no Imperial *amir* bold enough to resist him, and every loss

he inflicted on their forces made the boldest warriors quake. Ismail Khān was accounted one of the bravest and most skilful warriors of the Dakhin, but he was defeated in the first action, his army was plundered, and he himself was wounded and made prisoner. After some months he obtained his release, on the payment of a large sum of money. So also Rustam Khān, otherwise called Sharza Khān, the *Rustam* of the time and as brave as a lion, was defeated by him in the district of Sātāra, and after losing his baggage and all that he had with him, he was taken prisoner, and had to pay a large sum for his ransom. Ali Mardān Khān, otherwise called Husaini Beg Haidarābādī, . . . was defeated and made prisoner with several others. After a detention of some days, they obtained their release on paying a ransom of two *lacs of rupees*.'

In 1691 the Mughal position at Jinji became very critical. Next year matters were made worse by the negotiations of Prince Kām Bakhsh with the enemy ; so he was arrested by his colleagues (Dec. 1692 to Jan. 1693). Between 1691-96, the activities of Pidia Nāyak, the Berad chief, harassed the Imperial arms in the strategically important tract between Bidar and Bijapur and from Rāichūr to Malkhed.

" At last, by April 1659, Aurangzeb came to realize that he had really gained nothing by the conquest of the Adil-Shāhi and Qutb-Shāhi capitals and the extinction of their royal lines. He now perceived that the Maratha problem was no longer what it had been in Shivāji's time, or even in Shambhuji's. They were no longer a tribe of banditti or local rebels, but *the one dominating factor of Deccan politics*, the only enemy left to the empire, and yet an enemy all-pervasive from Bombay to Madras across the Indian peninsula, elusive as the wind, without any headman or stronghold whose capture would naturally result in the extinction of their power." Giving up all hopes, therefore, of being able to return to the North, Aurangzeb, in May 1695, sent his eldest surviving son, Shāh Ālam, to govern and guard the north-west (Punjab, Sind, and then Afghanistan). For the next 4½ years he settled down at Islāmpuri (Bahā-durgarh) to conduct the operations. The chief incidents of this period were the destruction of two Mughal generals, Kāsim Khān (Nov. 1695) and Himmat Khān (Jan. 1696), the murder of Santāji Ghorpade in a domestic feud, and the return of Rājārām as a result of the fall of Jinji in January 1698.

With the flight of Rājārām from Jinji began the last phase of Aurangzeb's war in the Deccan. "The rest of his life (1699-1707) is a repetition of the same sickening tale : a hill-fort captured by him

after a vast expenditure of time, men and money, the fort recovered by the Marathas from the weak Mughal garrison after a few months, and its siege begun again by the Mughals a year or two later ! His soldiers and camp-followers suffered unspeakable hardships, in marching over flooded rivers, muddy roads, and broken hilly tracks ; porters disappeared ; transport beasts died of hunger and overwork ; scarcity of grain was ever present in his camp. His officers wearied of this labour of Sisyphus ; but Aurangzeb would burst into wrath at any suggestion of return to Northern India and taunt the unlucky counsellor with cowardice and love of ease. The mutual jealousies of his generals ruined his affairs as completely as the French cause in the Peninsular War was ruined by the jealousies of Napoleon's marshals. Therefore, the Emperor must conduct every operation in person, or nothing would be done. The siege of eight forts—Sātāra, Parli, Panhāla, Khelna (Vishālgarh), Kondana (Simhagarh), Raigarh, Torṇa and Wagingera,—occupied him for five years and a half (1699-1705)."

The fact that, with the exception of Torṇa, all other forts yielded to the golden key of bribery throws a lurid light on the extent of demoralisation that had come over the successors of Bāji Prabhu and Tānāji. Out of this welter we might choose for description only the siege of *Sātāra* which is reminiscent of the siege of Chitor by Akbar, in its strenuous effort and appalling toll of destruction.

' At the end of Jumada-s sani (Dec. 1699) the royal army arrived opposite Sātāra, and the camp was pitched at a distance of a *kos* and a half. Prince Muhammad Āzam Shāh encamped on another side, and the *amirs* and officers were posted according to the judgment of Tarbiyat Khān. They all vied with each other in throwing up lines, digging mines, and carrying on other siege operations. . . . On both sides a heavy fire was kept up, . . . and the garrison rolled down great stones, which came bounding down and crushed many men and animals. The rain obstructed the arrival of corn ; the enemy were very daring in attacking the convoys, and the country for twenty *kos* round the fortress had been burnt, so that grain and hay became very scarce and dear. A battery, twenty-four yards (*dar'a*) high, was thrown up in face of the hill, and on the Prince's side also the batteries were carried to the foot of the hill. A hundred and sixty thousand rupees were paid for the services of the troops and *māwalis* of that country, who are very efficient in sieges. . . . Matters went hard with the garrison, and the chance of firing a gun or a musket was no longer in their power ; all that they could do was to roll down stones from the walls. . . .

'Stone-masons were employed by the besiegers to cut two vaults in the side of the rock four yards broad and ten yards long, which were to be used as stations for sentinels. But when they were found not to answer for this purpose, they were filled with powder. . . On the morning of the 5th Zi-l kada, in the fourth month of the siege, one of these was fired. The rock and the wall above it were blown into the air and fell inside the fortress. Many of the garrison were blown up and burnt. The besiegers, on beholding this, pushed boldly forward. At that time the second mine was fired. A portion of the rock above was blown up, but instead of falling into the fortress, as was expected, it came down upon the heads of besiegers like a mountain of destruction, and several thousands were buried under it . . . The garrison then set about repairing the walls, and they again opened fire and rolled down the life-destroying stones.

'When Aurangzeb was informed of the disaster, and of the despondency of his men, he mounted his horse, and went to the scene of action as if in search of death. He gave orders that the bodies of the dead should be piled upon each other, and made to serve as shields against the arrows of calamities ; then with the ladder of resolution, and the scaling-ropes of boldness, the men should rush to the assault. When he perceived that his words made no impression on the men, he was desirous to lead the way himself, accompanied by Muhammad Āzam Shāh. But the nobles objected to this rash proposition.

'An extraordinary incident now occurred. A great number of Hindu infantry soldiers had been killed all at once (in the explosion), and their friends were unable to send and bring out their bodies. The violence of the shock had entirely disfigured them, and it was not possible to distinguish between Musulman and Hindu, friend and stranger. The flames of animosity burst forth among all the gunners against the commander of the artillery. So at night they secretly set fire to the defences (*marhala*), which had been raised at great trouble and expense against the fire from above, in the hope and with the design that the fire might reach the corpse of the slaughtered Hindus. A great conflagration followed, and for the space of a week served as a bright lamp both for besiegers and besieged. A number of Hindus and Musulmans who were alive in the huts were unable to escape, and were burnt, the living with the dead.'

Rājārām, who since his return from Jinji had occupied himself with inspecting his forts in Konkan and forming plans of extensive raids in Khāndesh and Berar, died at Simhagarh on 2 March, 1700. He had left Sātāra on 26 October, 1699, in order to escape falling into the hands of the enemy. The news of his death disheartened the besieged at Sātāra and led to the capitulation of that fortress in April 1700.

*Last Phase :* The nature of the struggle after the death of Rājārām is thus depicted by Khāfi Khān :—

'When Rām Rāja died leaving only his widows and infants, men thought that the power of the Marathas over the Dakhin was at an end. But Tārā Bāi, the elder wife (of Rājārām), made her son of three years old successor to his father, and took the reins of government into her own hands. She took vigorous measures for ravaging the Imperial territory, and sent armies to plunder the six *subahs* of the Dakhin as far as Sironj, Mandasor, and the *subah* of Mālwa. She won the hearts of her officers, and for all the struggles and schemes, the campaigns and sieges of Aurangzeb up to the end of his reign, the power of the Marathas increased day by day. By hard fighting, by the expenditure of the vast treasures accumulated by Shāh Jahān, and by the sacrifice of many thousands of men, he had penetrated into their wretched country, had subdued their lofty forts, and had driven them from house and home; still, the daring of the Marathas increased, and they penetrated into the old territories of the Imperial throne, plundering and destroying wherever they went. In imitation of the Emperor, who with his armies and enterprising *amirs* was staying in those distant mountains, the commanders of Tārā Bāi cast the anchor of permanence wherever they penetrated, and having appointed *kamaishdārs* (revenue collectors), they passed the years and months to their satisfaction, with their wives and children, tents and elephants. Their daring went beyond all bounds. They divided all the districts (*parganas*) among themselves, and following the practice of the Imperial rule, they appointed their *subadārs* (provincial governors), *kamaishdārs* (revenue collectors), and *rahdārs* (toll-collectors)... They attacked and destroyed the country as far as the borders of Ahmedābad and the districts of Mālwa, and spread their devastations through the provinces of the Dakhin to the environs of Ujjain. They fell upon and plundered large caravans within ten or twelve *kos* of the Imperial camp, and even had the hardihood to attack the royal treasure.' Khāfi Khān winds up by saying, 'It would be a troublesome and useless task to commit to writing all their misdeeds; but it must suffice to record some few of the events which occurred in those days of sieges, *which, after all, had no effect in suppressing the daring of the Marathas.*'

There was corruption in both the camps, as well as feuds and defections among important officers. But this weakness was more than counterbalanced by the determination of Aurangzeb, on the one hand, and the intrepid leadership of Tārā Bāi, on the other. For a time the Emperor tried to make political capital out of Shāhu (Sambhājī's eldest son) who was in the Imperial camp ever since the capture and execution of his father; but this proved of no avail. As Bhīmsen puts it. 'As the Marathas had not been vanquished and the entire Deccan had come into their possession like a deliciously cooked pudding, why should they make peace?... The envoys of the Prince returned in disappointment, and Rāja Shāhu was again placed under surveillance in the *gulāl bār.*'

So the laborious and endless task of capturing individual fortresses was continued. After Sātāra (1700) came Parli (1701), Panhāla (1701), Khelna (1701), Kondāṇa (1703), Rājgarh (1703), and Torna (1704),—all excepting the last being taken, not so much by assault, as by what Khāfi Khān calls 'negotiations with the commandants and promises of material advancement.' The last expedition ever led by Aurangzeb in person was against the Berad chief Pidiya Nāyak. He proved the last political straw that broke the Imperial camel's back. The capture of Wagingera, in April 1705, was a pyrrhic victory for Aurangzeb. "Wagingera was captured, but its chieftain had escaped and lived to give trouble to the victors. Thus, all Aurangzeb's labours for these three months were lost."

#### DESOLATION AND DEATH :

The ultimate result of Aurangzeb's nearly quarter century of campaigning in the Deccan is thus described by Manucci, a contemporary European observer :

'Aurangzeb withdrew to Ahmednagar leaving behind him the fields of these provinces devoid of trees and bare of crops, their place being taken by the bones of men and beasts. Instead of verdure all is blank and barren. There have died in his armies over a hundred thousand souls yearly, and of animals, pack-oxen, camels, elephants, etc., over three hundred thousand. In the Deccan provinces, from 1702 to 1704, plague [and famine] prevailed. In these two years there expired over two millions of souls.'

The retreat of Aurangzeb to Ahmednagar brought no rest to his army or peace to his Empire. In April or May 1706 a great Maratha army under all its leaders appeared within four miles of his camp, and they were repulsed only after a very severe contest.

*In a twinkle, in a minute, in a breath, the condition of the world changes.*

'On Friday, the 28th Zi-l ka'da, in the fifty-first year of the reign, corresponding with 1118 A. H. (21 February 1707 A. D.,) after performing morning prayers and repeating the creed, at about one watch of the day, the Emperor departed this life. He was ninety years and some months old, and had reigned fifty years, two months and a half. He was buried near Daulatābad (at Khuldābad) by the tombs of Sheikh Burhānu-d dīn and other religious worthies, and of Shāh Zari Zarbakhsh, and some districts of Burhānpur were assign-

ed for the maintenance of his tomb.' Finally, Khāfi Khān winds up with the following estimate of the Emperor :—

'Of all the sovereigns of the House of Timūr—nay, of all the sovereigns of Delhi—no one since Sikander Loḍī, has ever been apparently so distinguished for devotion, austerity, and justice. In courage, long-suffering and sound judgment, he was unrivalled. But from reverence for the injunctions of the Law he did not make use of punishment, and without punishment the administration of a country cannot be maintained. Dissensions had arisen among his nobles through rivalry. So every plan and project that he formed came to little good ; and every enterprise which he undertook was long in execution, and failed of its object. Although he lived for ninety years, his five senses were not at all impaired, except his hearing, and that too only to so slight an extent that it was not perceptible to others. He often passed his nights in vigils and devotion, and he denied himself many pleasures naturally belonging to humanity.'

So passed away Aurangzeb whom Sarkar calls "the greatest of the Great Mughals save one." The last years of the Emperor were crowded with bereavements. The pathos of this double tragedy, domestic and political, rings through Aurangzeb's last letters written to his sons. One may be quoted *in extenso* as a sample.

#### LAST LETTER TO ĀZAM

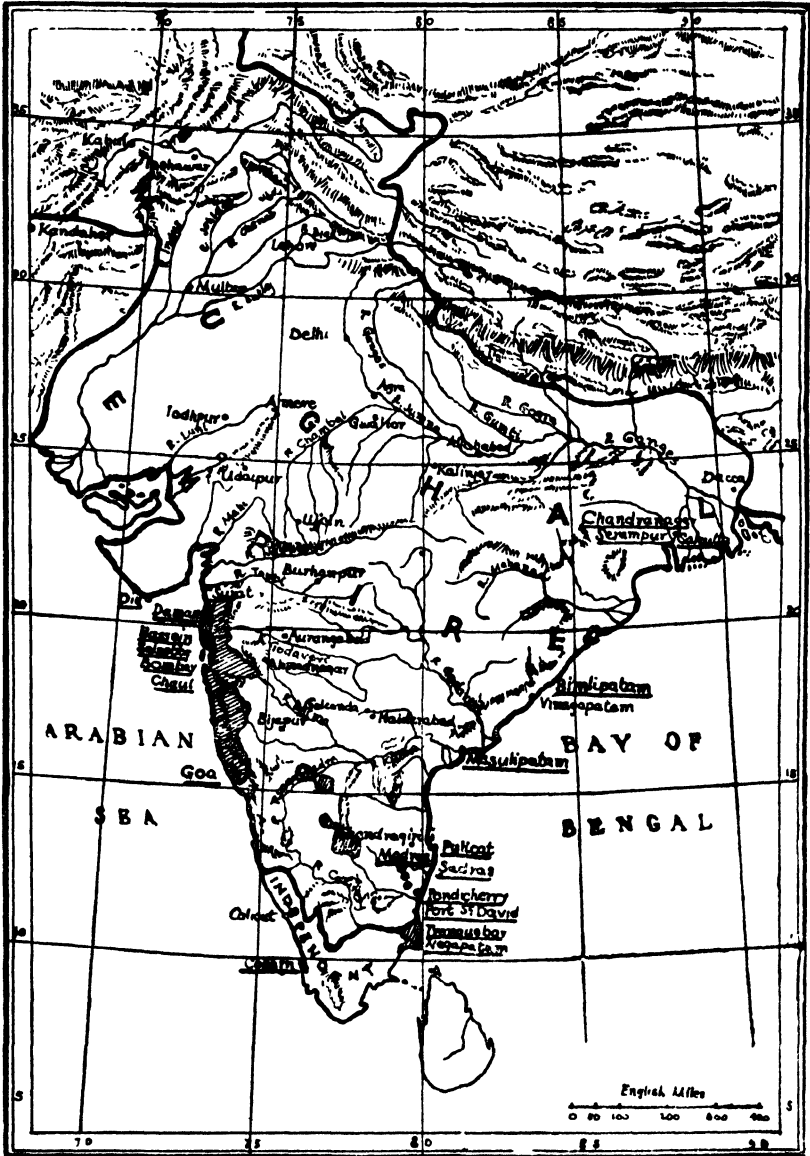
'Peace be on you'

'Old age has arrived and weakness has grown strong ; strength has left my limbs. I came alone and am going away alone. I know not who I am and what I have been doing. The days that have been spent except in austerities have left only regret behind them. I have not at all done any (true) government of the realm or cherishing of the peasantry.

'Life, so valuable, has gone away, for nothing. The Master has been in my house, but my darkened eyes cannot see His splendour. Life lasts not ; no trace is left of the days that are no more ; and of the future there is no hope.

'My fever has departed, leaving only the skin and husks behind it. My son Kām Bakhsh, who has gone to Bijapur, is near me. And you are nearer even than he. Dear Shāh Ālam is farthest of all. Grandson Muhammad Azim has, by order of the Great God, arrived near Hindustan (from Bengal).

'All the soldiers are feeling helpless, bewildered, and perturbed like me, who having chosen to leave my Master, am now in a state of trepidation like quicksilver. They think not that we have our Lord Father (ever with us). I brought nothing with me (into the world), and am carrying away with me the fruits of my sins. I know not what punishment will fall on me. Though I have strong hopes of His grace and kindness, yet in view of my acts anxiety does not leave me. When I am parting from my own self, who else would remain to me ?



The Empire under Aurangzeb





*Whatever the wind may be,  
I am launching my boat on the water.*

*'Though the Lord Cherisher will preserve His slaves, yet from the point of view of the outer world, it is also the duty of my sons to see that God's creatures and Muslims may not unjustly be slain. Convey to my grandson Bahādur (i.e., Bidar Bakht) my parting blessing. At the time of going away I do not see him; the desire of meeting remains (unsatisfied). Though the Begam is, as can be seen, afflicted with grief, yet God is the master of our hearts. Shortness of sight bears no other fruit than disappointment.*

*'Farewell! Farewell! Farewell!'*

#### AURANGZEB AND THE EUROPEANS :

Aurangzeb's relations with the Europeans, except when they were piratical or otherwise recalcitrant, were on the whole friendly. Though the days of active patronage of the Christians were over, they did not suffer as might have been expected under Aurangzeb's pontifical régime. Being strong where the Empire was weak, namely at sea, they were distinctly in a diplomatically advantageous position. Besides this, on the west coast, they could and did play a double game as between the Mughals and the Marathas; they tried to bargain with both. As artillerymen their services were greatly appreciated in that military age. Their contribution to the revenues of the Empire, by way of customs, was not negligible. If not kept friendly they were a source of great irritation and danger to the pilgrim and other traffic at the ports and in the sea. The principal nationals concerned in this were the Portuguese and the English; the Dutch and the French played only a secondary rôle, at least in their direct relations with the Empire.

*The Portuguese :* Khāfi Khān gives the following account of the Portuguese in the time of Aurangzeb :—

*'The officers of the King of Portugal occupied several neighbouring ports, and had erected forts in strong positions and under the protection of hills. They built villages, and in all matters acted very kindly towards the people, and did not vex them with oppressive taxes. They allotted a separate quarter for the Musulmans who dwelt with them, and appointed a Kāzi over them to settle all matters of taxes and marriage. But the call to prayer and public devotion were not permitted in their settlements. If a poor traveller had to pass through their possessions, he would meet with no other trouble; but he would not be able to say his prayers at his ease. On the sea they are not like the English, and do not attack other ships which have not received their pass according to rule, or the*

ships of Arabia and Maskat, with which two countries they have a long-standing enmity, and they attack each other whenever opportunity offers. If a ship from a distant port is wrecked and falls into their hands, they look upon it as their prize. *But their greatest act of tyranny is this.* If a subject of these misbelievers dies, leaving young children, and no grown up son, the children are considered wards of the State. They take them to their places of worship, their churches, which they have built in many places, and the *pādris*, that is to say the priests, instruct the children in the Christian religion, and bring them up in their own faith, whether the child be a Musulman *saiyid* or a Hindu *brāhmaṇ*. They also make them serve as slaves.

'In the Adil-shāhi Konkan, close to the sea, in the fine and famous fort of Goa, their governor resides; and there is a captain there who exercises full powers on the part of Portugal. They have also established some other ports and flourishing villages. Besides this, the Portuguese occupy the country from 14 to 15 *kos* south of Surat to the boundaries of the fort of Bombay, which belongs to the English, and to the borders of the territories of the Habshis, which is called the Nizām-shāhi Konkan. In the rear of the hills of Baglana, and in strong positions, difficult of access, near the fort of Gulshanābad, they have built seven or eight other forts, small and great. Two of these, by name Daman and Basi, which they obtained by fraud from Sultan Bahādur of Gujarat, they have made very strong, and the villages around are flourishing. Their possessions measure in length about 40 to 50 *kos*; but they are not more than a *kos* or a *kos* and a half in width. They cultivate the skirts of the hills, and grow the best products, such as sugar-cane, pine-apples, and rice; and cocoanut trees, and betel-nut vines, in vast numbers, from which they derive a very large revenue.

'They have made for use in districts a silver coin called *ashrafī*, worth nine *annas*. They also use bits of copper which they call *buzurg*, and four of these *buzurgs* pass for a *fulus*. *The orders of the King (of India) are not current there.* When the people there marry, the girl is given as the dowry, and they leave the management of all affairs in the house and out of it, to their wives. They have only one wife, and concubinage is not permitted by their religion .....

*Pirates of Chatgaon*: The chief trouble to the Empire, as we saw under Shāh Jahān, was from the pirates of Chatgaon. Besides the Māghs and Arrakanese, they included among them a good number of Portuguese and half-caste adventurers. Evidently these had never been tamed by the severe measures taken by Aurangzeb's father. Indeed, when their captain was asked by Shayistha Khān, the Mughal Governor of Bengal, "What did the *zamindar* of the Māghs fix as your salary?" the corsair-chief had the audacity to reply, "*Our salary was the Imperial dominion! We considered the whole of*

*Bengal as our jagir.* The twelve months of the year we made our collection [i. e., booty] without trouble. We had never to bother ourselves about *amlas* and *amins*; nor had we to render accounts and balances to anybody. Passage over water was (land) survey. We never slackened the enhancement of *our* rents, viz., booty. For years we have left no arrears of [this] revenue. We have with us papers of the division of the booty, village by village for the last 40 years."

Mir Jumla, on account of his preoccupation with the Assam campaign and sudden death, having failed to suppress these *Feringi* pirates, Shayistha Khān (who succeeded to the viceroyalty of Bengal on 8 March, 1664) determined to suppress them once for all. Their cruelties had become intolerable. Manucci describes them as 'men hard of heart, accustomed to kill even little children without a regret.' The details of the campaign may be read in Sarkar. On the morning of 26 January, 1666, the fort of Chatgaon, the nest of the pirates (Māgh and *Feringi*), surrendered. 'Large numbers of the peasants of Bengal who had been carried off and kept prisoners here, were now released from the Māgh oppression and returned to their homes' (*Alamgīr-nāmā*). 'On 27 January, 1666, Buzurg Umed Khān entered the fort of Chatgaon, reassured the people that their lives were safe, and firmly forbade his soldiers to oppress the people, in order to cause the place to be well-populated and prosperous.' (Shihabūddīn). The place was re-named Islāmābad.

*Diplomatic Relations* : In the war with the Marathas, as already noticed, the Portuguese, being placed between two fires, tried to receive warmth from both without getting scorched. By way of illustration may be cited the conduct of the Portuguese viceroy at the time of Jai Singh. In reply to letters from the latter, in 1665, the former replied assuring that he had sent orders to all the captains not to help Shivāji, according to Jai Singh's request. A treaty was signed, in January 1667, between the Portuguese and the Mughals, in which it was agreed among other things that the 'Farangian should not protect (pardon, *lit.*) in their kingdom a man who rebels against the Mughal King, and should consider him as a rebel against the Portugal King.' Yet, before Aurangzeb made peace with Shivāji in March 1668, the Portuguese had already come to terms with the Marathas in December 1667, a year after the treaty above referred to. But when Sambhāji invaded Goa together with the rebellious Prince

Akbar, in 1683-4, the Portuguese again acted in concert with the Imperialists, and again came to terms with the Marathas. The friendliness of the Portuguese towards the Marathas once again brought down the Imperial arms into their Northern territory (i. e., Bassein and Daman), in 1693, when Matabar Khān (the governor of Kalyān) defeated their armies and made prisoners of their subjects. "The viceroy of Goa at last made peace by humble submission to the Emperor and the offer of presents."

*The English* : The first English factory within the Mughal Empire was established at Surat in 1612. From there goods were exchanged, by the land route, with Agra and Delhi. In the Golkonda kingdom they had an agency at Masulipatam. Further north they established a factory at Hariharpur, 25 miles s. e. of Cuttack, and another at Balasore in 1633. Outside the Empire they bought, in 1640, the site of Fort St. George (Madras), which was 'their first independent station in India.' Hugli was opened in 1651, and a *nishān* (or order) was obtained from Prince Shuja (1652) permitting the English to trade in Bengal on payment of Rs. 3,000 annually in lieu of all kinds of customs and dues. "The Bengal trade continued to grow rapidly : in 1668 the company exported from the province goods worth £ 34,000, in 1675 the value rose to £ 85,000, in 1677 to £ 100,000, and in 1680 to £ 150,000.....The first British ship sailed up the Ganges from the Bay of Bengal in 1679."

*War in Bengal* : On the strength of the *nishān* above referred to the English began to claim exemption from all duties, which led to friction and ultimately war. In March 1680 Aurangzeb had also issued a *firmān* allowing the English, on payment of a consolidated duty of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  p. c. at Surat, to trade freely within the Empire. This was differently interpreted by the two parties. Besides, the English refused to pay exactions like *rahdāri*, *peskhaskh*, *farmaish*, etc., and protested against the practice (*sauda-i-khās*) of Imperial and local officials, opening packages of goods in transit and taking away articles at less than market prices.

Commenting on this, Sir Jadunath Sarkar observes, "On 10 April 1665 Aurangzeb issued an order that in all provinces there would be two uniform rates of custom duty on imports in future, namely  $2\frac{1}{2}$  p. c. for Muslims and 5 p. c. for Hindus. The Mughal Government seems to have found it difficult to assess and levy *jaziya* per head from the Europeans in the same manner as from the Hindus.

and consequently it seems to have offered them (March 1680) a compromise by turning the *jaziya* into an addition to the import duty on their goods, raising the latter to 3½ p. c.

*"The claims of the English in Bengal (a) to escape the duty on the actual value of their imports by a fixed annual payment of Rs. 3,000 (as conceded by Shuja in 1652) and (b) to trade absolutely free in all other parts of India on payment of customs in Surat (in virtue of Aurangzeb's firman of 1680), are both false and indefensible on any reasoning."*

But the English were determined to defend their evasion by force. A sample of their attitude is seen in Job Charnock's refusal to pay the sum of Rs. 43,000 decreed by an Indian judge against claims put forward by the Indian merchants and brokers employed by the E. I. Co. at Kasimbazar (1684-85); consequently Charnock's factory was invested by Imperial troops in August 1685. The mal-factors escaped to Hugli in April next. On 28 October 1686, the English provoked a fight and sacked the Mughal town of Hugli. Shayistha Khān, on hearing of this, "decided to crush these disturbers of public peace." In December the English fell back on Sutanati (modern Calcutta). In February 1687 they seized the island of Hijli, where they assembled all their land and sea forces in the Bay of Bengal, and burnt and looted Balasore for two days. Finally they were overwhelmed by Mughal troops, and on 11 June the English evacuated Hijli fort, "carrying off all their ammunition and artillery, their drums beating and their banners flying!" In 1688 Job Charnock's place as Agent in Bengal was taken by Captain Heath who disgraced the name of England by his great excesses, ill-treating Christians and non-Christians, men and women alike. Being foiled in his project of wresting Chatgaon from the Mughals, he sailed for Madras in sheer disgust (17 February 1689).

The Emperor, on hearing of these hostile activities, at once ordered the arrest of all Englishmen, the seizure of all their factories, and the prohibition of all trade and intercourse with them. Within a year (February 1690), 'The English [of Surat] having made a most humble, submissive petition.....and [promised] that they would present the Emperor with a fine of Rs. 150,000.....and behave themselves no more in such a shameful manner,.....His Majesty pardoned their faults and agreed.....that they follow their trade as in former times.' After this the English were allowed

to return to Bengal and trade freely without any further trouble. Job Charnock came back from Madras to Sutanati as Agent on 24 August. "This was the foundation of Calcutta and of the British Power in Northern India. On 10 February 1691 an Imperial order (*hasb-ul-hukam*) was issued by the grand wazir to the dewan of Bengal, allowing the English to carry on their trade in that province without molestation on paying Rs. 3,000 a year in lieu of all custom and other dues." Although this was apparently a victory for the English it was evidently the outcome of the intercession of Ibrāhim Khān, the new *Subadār* of Bengal, who was friendly to the English and had taken charge of the province in May 1689.

*War on the West Coast* : Sir Josiah Child, Chairman of the E. I. Co. in London, had been responsible for the ignominious war in Bengal. He was ambitious to lay 'the foundation of a large, well-grounded, sure English dominion in India for all time to come.' In the result, "The expedition, rashly planned and unfortunate in execution, was an utter failure." Sir John Child, General and Director-in-Chief of English Factories in India, acting under instructions from home, led a similar expedition with no more honourable results. On 25th April, 1687, he abandoned Surat ("a fool's paradise") for Bombay ("the key of India"). He demanded from the Mughal Governor of Surat "compensation for past injuries and a new charter confirming and extending their privileges." The Mughal reply to such conduct was the obvious one. The English factory at Surat was invested by Imperial troops, and the English factors, including among them Benjamin Harris, the Chief of the Surat Council, were imprisoned and kept in irons for 16 months (December 1688—April 1690). At the same time the Siddis of Janjira, as allies of the Mughals, attacked Bombay (May 1689) and confined the English within their fort. "Governor Child, therefore, made an abject appeal for pardon, sending a mission to Aurangzeb under G. Weldon and Abraham Navarro (10th Dec. 1689). The Emperor pardoned them, by an order dated 25th December 1689. The English were restored to their old position in the Indian trade on condition of paying a fine of one-and-a-half lakhs of Rupees, and restoring the goods taken from Indian ships."

*English Piracy* : European piracy in the Indian Ocean had commenced with Vasco da Gama at the close of the 15th century. "It excited no moral reprobation in Christendom." In 1635, Cobb, cap-

tain of an English ship licensed by Charles I, plundered two Mughal vessels at the mouth of the Red Sea ; and in 1638, Sir William Courten, with a similar charter from the King of England, sent out four ships which robbed Indian vessels and tortured their crews." For these misdeeds the E. I. Co. at Surat was obliged to pay an indemnity of Rs. 1,70,000. " In the second half of the 17th century," writes Sarkar, " an even more lawless race of men than the old Buccaneers appeared and extended their operations to the Indian Ocean, acting generally in single ships and plundering vessels of every nationality. 'Of these men, chiefly English, the most notorious were Teach, Ivory, Kidd, Roberts, England and Tew, and many others less known to fame. . . . Roberts alone was credited with the destruction of 400 trading vessels in three years. . . . The chief cause of their immunity lay in the fact that it was business of nobody in particular to act against them. . . . Their friends on shore supplied their wants and gave them timely information of rich prizes to be looked for, or armed ships to be avoided. *Officials high in authority winked at their doings, from which they drew a profit. . . .* Not only were the greater number of pirates of English blood, but pirate captains of other nationalities often sailed under English colours. The native officials, unable to distinguish the rogues from the honest traders, held the E. I. Co's servants responsible for their misdeeds.'" In 1681 two pirate ships flying English colours secured a booty of 6 lakhs of Rupees in the Red Sea. The most notorious among these buccaneers was Henry Bridgman (*alias* Ivory). His crowning achievement, the capture of the *Ganj-i-Sawai*, is thus described by Khāfi Khān :—

'The royal ship called the *Ganj-i-sawai*, than which there was no larger in the port of Surat, used to sail every year for the House of God (at Mecca). It was now bringing back to Surat 52 lacs of rupees in silver and gold, the produce of the sale of Indian goods at Mocha and Jedda . (It was attacked and sunk by English pirates).

'This loss was reported to Aurangzeb, and the news-writers of the port of Surat sent some rupees which the English had coined at Bombay, with a superscription containing the name of their impure King. Aurangzeb then ordered that the English factors who were residing at Surat for commerce should be seized. Orders were also given to Itimad Khān, superintendent of the port of Surat, and Sidi Yakut Khān, to make preparations for besieging the fort of Bombay. The evils arising from the English occupation of Bombay were of long standing. The English were not at all alarmed at the threatenings. They knew that Sidi Yakut was offended at some slights he had received. But they were more active than usual in building bastions.



and walls, and in blocking up the roads, so that in the end they made the place quite impregnable. Itimad Khān saw all these preparations, and came to the conclusion that there was no remedy, and that a struggle with the English would result only in a heavy loss to the customs revenue. He made no serious preparations for carrying the royal order into execution, and was not willing that one rupee should be lost to the revenue. To save appearances, he kept the English factors in confinement, but privately he endeavoured to effect an arrangement. After the confinement of their factors, the English, by way of reprisal, seized upon every Imperial officer, wherever they found one, on sea or on shore, and kept them all in confinement. So matters went on for a long time.'

Khāfi Khān concludes this account with the following note :—' The total revenue of Bombay, which is chiefly derived from betel-nuts and cocoanuts, does not reach to two or three *lacs* of rupees. The profits of the commerce of these misbelievers, according to report, does not exceed twenty *lacs* of rupees. *The balance of the money acquired for the maintenance of the English settlement is obtained by plundering the ships voyaging to the House of God, of which they take one or two every year.* When the ships are proceeding to the ports of Mocha and Jedda laden with the goods of Hindustan, they do not interfere with them ; but when they return bringing gold and silver and *Ibrāhimi* and *rial*, their spies have found out which ship bears the richest burden, and they attack it.'

The culprits when they could be caught were imprisoned, the E. I. Co's factors and officers were indemnified, imprisoned or threatened with extradition, but European piracy continued triumphant in Indian waters in the absence of a strong Indian navy. After the *Ganj-i-sawai* incident, in September 1695, the Dutch proffered to clear the seas in return for exclusive rights of trading within the Empire free of all duty ; but the Emperor declined the offer. An agreement, on the other hand, was made with the English for a similar responsibility in return for half the running cost of each double voyage of the escorting ship. Consequently all the English prisoners were set at liberty on 27th June, 1696. But the same year saw the renewal of piracy in a more virulent form under Captain William Kidd, " destined to blossom into the most redoubtable pirate who ever besmirched the honour of England."

" He had been sent out by a syndicate of English noblemen on the *Adventure*, a very strong 30—gun vessel, to destroy piracy in the Indian Ocean ! Arriving off Calicut early in 1697, he took to a life of piracy, shamelessly describing his robberies as legitimate acts of privateering authorized by the King of England. Kidd's success drew many restless English seamen into his party. 'Distributing his forces with the skill of a sea-strategist,' Captain Kidd dominated the Indian Ocean, with his munitions

and stores drawn from a base in Madagascar. 'All told, the pirate fleet mounted 120 guns and was manned by not less than 300 Europeans, of whom the great majority were Englishmen.'

Finally, in December 1698, Amānat Khān, the Mughal governor of Surat, surrounded the European factories and gave them an ultimatum either to give an undertaking to guard the seas or to leave the country within ten days. Consequently, "the English, French and Dutch agreed to act in concert to suppress piracy, and signed bonds by which they *jointly* engaged to make good all future losses. On receiving this agreement, Aurangzeb reversed his embargo on European trade in the Mughal dominions, and he wrote to the Surat governor to settle the matter in his own way. According to the terms of this agreement, 'the Dutch convoyed the Mecca pilgrims and patrolled the entrance to the Red Sea, besides paying Rs. 70,000 to the governor of Surat; the English paid Rs. 30,000 and patrolled the South Indian seas, while the French made a similar payment and policed the Persian Gulf.'"

#### THE RIDDLE OF AURANGZEB :

Aurangzeb was a great enigma even to his contemporaries; we are hardly in a better position to correctly understand him. His reign was a great riddle. Lane-Poole describes Aurangzeb, as "a puzzling compound of contradictions." Bernier found him, 'reserved, subtle, and a complete master of the art of dissimulation.' 'Every person in the court, excepting only his brother, Dārā, seemed to form an erroneous estimate of his character.'

*His Ideal* : Aurangzeb's letters, of which over 2,000 are extant, are an invaluable treasure throwing abundant light upon his manifold character. In one of these, written to his father Shāh Jahān, he writes, "*It is clear to your Majesty that God Almighty bestows His trust upon one who discharges the duty of cherishing his subjects and protecting the people. It is manifest and clear to wise men that a wolf is not fit for a shepherd, and that no poor-spirited man can perform the great duty of governing. Sovereignty signifies protection of the people, not self-indulgence and libertinism.*" To an officer who suggested to Aurangzeb that, for considerations of health, he should spare himself, he said : 'Being born the son of a King and placed on the throne, *I was sent into the world by Providence to live and labour, not for myself, but for others.. it is my duty not to think of*

*my own happiness, except so far as it is inseparably connected with the happiness of my people. It is the repose and prosperity of my subjects that it behoves me to consult ; nor are these to be sacrificed to anything besides the demands of justice, the maintenance of the royal authority, and the security of the State.'*

Again, in another letter to his father, he declared : '*The greatest conquerors are not always the greatest kings. The nations of the earth have often been subjugated by mere uncivilised barbarians, and the most extensive conquests have in a few short years crumbled to pieces. He is the truly great king who makes it the chief business of his life to govern his subjects with equity.*' That these were no idle sentiments diplomatically expressed to deceive the world is borne out by the wise regulations he made for the guidance of his revenue officials. That he had also striven to act according to them has been amply demonstrated by his own civil achievements as Viceroy of the Deccan. We have space only for a few of these by way of illustration.

*Revenue Regulations* : 'The officers of the present and future *amils* of the Empire of Hindustan from end to end, should collect the revenue and other [dues] from the *mahāls* in the proportions and manner fixed in the luminous Law and shining orthodox Faith, and [according to] whatever has been meant and sanctioned in this gracious mandate in pursuance of the correct and trustworthy Traditions,—

'They should practise benevolence to the cultivators, inquire into their condition, and exert themselves judiciously and tactfully, so that [the cultivators] may joyfully and heartily try to increase the cultivation, and every arable tract may be brought under tillage. And that consists in this that *under no name or custom should you take a dām or dirham above the fixed amount and rate. By no person should the ryots be oppressed or molested in any way. If you find that the peasants are unable to procure the implements of tillage, advance to them money from the State in the form of a taqāwi after taking security. As the Emperor likes leniency and justice, [he here orders] that the officers should kindly wait for one year [for the return of a fugitive ryot] and, in the case of [direct] cultivation or lease, they should pay to him any surplus left above the Government revenue.'* Fix the revenue at such an amount that the ryots may not be ruined by the payment of it : and for no reason exceed half [the crop], even though the land may be capable of paying more. You may change fixed revenue (*Muzzaf*) into share of crop (*Muqasema*), or vice versa, if the ryots agree to it : otherwise not. 'In lands subject to fixed land revenues, if any non-preventable calamity overtakes a sown field you ought to inquire carefully, and grant remission to the extent of the calamity, as required by truth and the nature of the case. And in realising produce from the remnant, see that a net one-half [of the produce] may be left

to the ryots. In the case of fields which have been flooded, or where the rain-water has been exhausted, or any non-preventable calamity has overtaken the crop before reaping, so that the ryot has secured nothing, nor has he time enough left for a second crop to be raised before the beginning of the next year,—consider the revenue as remitted.’

‘Report the names of those among the *amins* and *kroris* of the *jagirdārs*, who have served with uprightness and devotion, and by following the established rules in every matter have proved themselves good officers,—so that as the result may be rewarded according to their attention to the gain of the State and their honesty. But if any have acted in the opposite manner, report the fact to the Emperor, that they may be dismissed from the service, put on their defence and explanation [of their conduct], and receive the punishment of their irregular acts. With great insistence gather together the papers of the records at the right time. In the village in which you stay, every day secure from the officers the daily account of the collection of revenue and cess and prices current, and from the other *parganas* the daily account of the collection of revenue and cash (*maujudāt*) every fortnight, and the balance in the treasuries of *jotahdārs* and the *jamā wāsil bāqi* every month, and the *tumār* of the total revenue and the *jamā bandi* (annual revenue settlement) and the incomes and expenditures of the treasuries of the *jotahdārs* season by season. After looking through these papers demand the refunding of whatever has been spent without being accounted for, and then send them to the Imperial Record Office. Do not leave the papers of the spring harvest uncollected up to the autumn harvest.’

It must have been clear to the reader from the above evidence that Aurangzeb had the right perspective for the ruler of an agricultural country like India. Despite the loss in revenue it involved, Aurangzeb, it is well known, soon after his accession, remitted no less than 80 different taxes and duties.

‘The movements of large armies through the country, especially in the eastern and northern parts, during the two years past, and scarcity of rain in some parts,’ observes Khāfi Khān, ‘had combined to make grain dear. To comfort the people and alleviate their distress, the Emperor gave orders for the remission of the *rahdāri* (toll) which was collected on every highway (*guzar*), frontier and ferry, and brought in a large sum to the revenue. He also remitted the *pandari*, a ground or house cess, which was paid throughout the Imperial dominions by every tradesman and dealer, from the butcher, the potter, and the green-grocer, to the draper, jeweller, and banker. Something was paid according to rule under this name for every bit of ground in the market for every stall and shop, and the total revenue thus derived exceeded *lacs* (of rupees). Other cesses, lawful and unlawful, as the *sur-shumari*, *buz-shumari*, *bar-gadi*, the *charai* (grazing tax) of the *Banjaras*, the *tuwa’ana*, the collections from the fairs held at the festivals of Muhammadan saints, and at the *jatras* or fairs of the infidels, held near Hindu temples, throughout the country far and wide, where *lacs* of people

assemble once a year, and where buying and selling of all kinds goes on. The tax on spirits, on gambling-houses, on brothels, the fines, thanks-offerings and the fourth part of debts recovered by the help of magistrates from creditors. These and other imposts, nearly eighty in number, which brought in *krors* of rupees to the public treasury, were all abolished throughout Hindustan. Besides these, the tith of corn, which lawfully brought in twenty-five *lacs* of rupees, was remitted to alleviate the heavy cost of grain.'

In spite of stringent orders, however, many of these forbidden dues continued to be exacted by selfish local officials, or *jagirdārs*.

But, says Khāfi Khān, 'When reports reached the government, of infractions of these orders, (the offenders) were punished with a diminution of *mansab*, and the delegation of mace-bearers to their districts. The mace-bearers forbade the collection of the imposts for a few days, and then retired. After a while, the offenders, through their patrons or the management of their agents, got their *mansab* restored to its original amounts. So the regulation for the abolition of most of the imposts had no effect.'

Lane-Poole's comments on this are worthy of attention. "Cynical critics," he observes, "have explained Aurangzib's ineffectual generosity as an ingenious contrivance to carry favour with the people without impoverishing the treasury. Dr. Careri seems to incline to the opinion that the Emperor connived at his Amir's misdeeds in order to gain their support. A certain amount of conciliation of powerful chiefs, and even winking at their irregularities, is inseparable from a quasi-feudal administration, and Aurangzib may have felt himself compelled sometimes to shut his eyes lest worse things should happen. The plain interpretation, however, of the remission of taxes as an act of bounty dictated by the Koranic injunction of benevolence to 'the needy and the son of the road,' is simpler and more consistent with all we know of the Emperor's disposition. *He was not the man to connive at illegal extortion or the oppression of the poor.*" We agree, Aurangzeb's wise counsel to his son Shāh Ālam may be taken as representing his correct attitude in such matters : 'An Emperor ought to stand midway between gentleness and severity. If either of these two qualities exceeds the other, it becomes a cause of the ruin of his throne, because in case of excessive gentleness, the people display audacity, while the increase of harshness scares away hearts.'

*Justice* : Not merely Indian writers but also foreigners bear testimony to the fair administration of justice under Aurangzeb. Ovington, "who derived his opinions and information from Aurangzib's least partial critics, the English merchants at Bombay and Surat,"

says that the Great Mogul 'is, the main ocean of justice . . . He generally determines with exact justice and equity ; for there is no pleading of peerage or privilege before the Emperor, but the meanest man is as soon heard by Aurangzīb as the chief Omrah : which makes the Omrahs very circumspect of their actions and punctual in their payments.' The author of the *Mirāt-i Alam*, Bakhtawar Khān, gives us the following picture of Aurangzeb the judge :—

' In his sacred Court no improper conversation, no word of back-biting or of falsehood is allowed. His courtiers on whom his light is reflected, are cautioned that if they have to say anything which might injure the character of an absent man, they should express themselves in decorous language and in full detail. He appears two or three times every day in his Court of Audience with a pleasing countenance and mild look, to dispense justice to complainants who come in numbers without hindrance, and as he listens to them with great attention, they make their representations without any fear or hesitation, and obtain redress from his impartiality. If any person talks too much, or acts in an improper manner, he is never displeased, and he never knits his brows. His courtiers have often desired to prohibit people from showing so much boldness, but he remarks that by hearing their very words, and seeing their gestures, he acquires a habit of forbearance and tolerance. All bad characters are expelled from the city of Delhi, and the same is ordered to be done in all places throughout the whole empire. The duties of preserving order and regularity among the people are very efficiently attended to, and throughout the empire, notwithstanding its great extent, nothing can be done without meeting with the due punishment enjoined by the Muhammadan law. *Under the dictates of anger and passion he never issues orders of death.*'

**Aurangzeb's Activity :** Great and incessant activity is a desideratum to great achievement. Aurangzeb shared this quality of his forefathers. Both Akbar and Shāh Jahān never spared themselves ; Humāyun's and Jahāngīr's love of ease were the cause of their comparative failure. Sher Shāh made his mark by his watchful and unceasing labours. Aurangzeb, if ever he needed the lesson, knew his history well. " An emperor," he told his son Muazzam, " should never allow himself to be fond of ease and inclined to retirement, because the most fatal cause of the decline of kingdoms and the destruction of royal power is this undesirable habit. Always be moving about, as much as possible :

It is bad for both emperors and water to remain at the same place,  
The water grows putrid and the King's power slips out of his control."

His motto appears to have been like that of his great western contemporary Louis XIV, whom he resembled in many ways (except

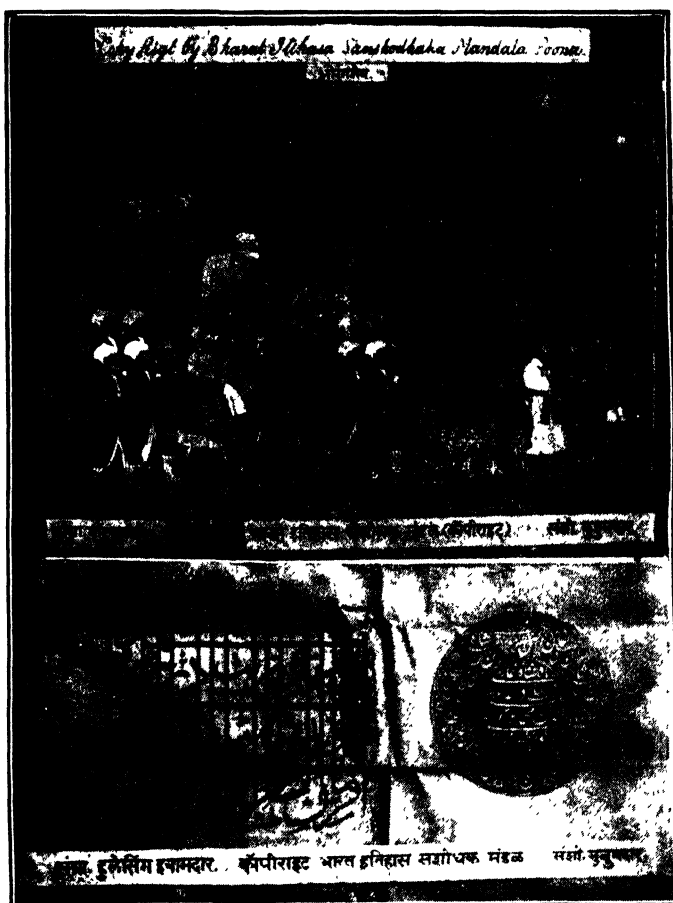
in his Puritanism),—"One must work hard to reign, and it is ingratitude and presumption towards God, injustice and tyranny towards man, to wish to reign without hard work." Aurangzeb himself wrote, 'So long as a single breath of this mortal life remains, there is no release from labour and work.' His daily routine bore ample testimony to his practice in this respect being in conformity with his ideas.

If we may believe in the *Alamgīr-nāmā* Aurangzeb slept only three hours out of the twenty-four. Through half-a-century of Imperial rule, through war and peace, through sickness and health, through sunshine and rain, Aurangzeb strictly adhered to his sense of duty and passion for work. Bernier records a wonderful illustration :—

'Aureng-zebe, notwithstanding his serious indisposition, continued to occupy his mind with the affairs of Government, and the safe custody of his father. He earnestly advised Sultan Muzum, in the event of his death, to release the King from confinement ; but he was constantly dictating letters to Etbar-kan, urging him to be faithful and rigid in the discharge of his duty ; and on the fifth day of his illness, during the crisis of the disorder, he caused himself to be carried into the assembly of the Omrahs, for the purpose of undeceiving those who might believe he was dead, and of preventing a public tumult, or any accident by which *Shah-Jehan* might effect his escape. The same reasons induced him to visit that assembly on the 7th, 9th and 10th days ; and, what appears almost incredible, on the 13th day, when scarcely recovered from a swoon so deep and long that his death was generally reported, he sent for the *Raja Jesseingue*, and two or three of the principal Omrahs, for the purpose of verifying his existence. He then desired the attendants to raise him in the bed ; called for paper and ink that he might write to Etbar-kan, and dispatched a messenger for the Great Seal, which was placed under Rauchenara-Begam's care enclosed in a small bag, which was impressed with a signet which he always kept fastened to his arm ; wishing to satisfy himself that the Princes had not made use of this instrument to promote any sinister design.' 'I was present,' continues Bernier with great admiration, 'when my Agah became acquainted with all these particulars, and heard him exclaim, 'what strength of mind ! what invincible courage ! Heaven reserve thee, Aureng-zebe, for greater achievement ! Thou art not yet destined to die.'

Elphinstone writes, "In reviewing these laborious undertakings, it is impossible not to admire the persevering spirit with which Aurangzeb bore up against the difficulties and misfortunes that overshadowed his declining years. He was near sixty-five when he crossed the *Narbada* to begin this long war and had attained his eighty-first before he quitted his cantonment at *Birampur*. The fatigues of marches and sieges were little suited to such an age ; and, in spite of the display

SHARMA : *Crescent in India*



Aurangzeb and Seal on Firmān



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of the luxury in his camp equipage, he suffered hardships that would have tried the constitution of a younger man. . . . The impassable streams, the flooded valleys, the miry bottoms and narrow ways caused still greater difficulties. . . . The violent heats, in tents and during marches, were distressing at other seasons, and often rendered overpowering by failure of water ; general famines and pestilences came more than once, in addition to the scarcity and sickness to which his own camp was often liable ; and all was aggravated by accounts of the havoc and destruction committed by the enemy in the countries beyond the reach of those visitations. *But in all these discouragements Aurangzib retained his vigour.* He alone conducted every branch of his government, in the most minute detail. He planned campaigns, and issued instructions during their progress ; drawings of forts were sent for by him to fix on the points of attack ; his letters embrace measures for keeping open the roads in the Afghan country, for quelling disturbances at Multan and Agra, and even for recovering possession of Candahar ; and, at the same time, there is scarcely a detachment marches or a convoy moves in the Deckan without some orders from Aurangzib's own hand. The appointment of the lowest revenue officer of a district, or the selection of a clerk in an office, is not beneath his attention ; and the conduct of all the functionaries is watched by means of spies and of prying inquiries from all comers, and they are constantly kept on the alert by admonitions founded on such information. This attention to particulars is not favourable to real progress of business, any more than it is indicative of enlarged genius ; but combined as it was in Aurangzib, with unremitting vigilance in all the great affairs of the State, *it shows an activity of mind that would be wonderful at any age."*

In his last will and testament Aurangzeb wrote,—‘ The main pillar of government is to be well informed in the news of the kingdom. Negligence for a single moment becomes the cause of disgrace for long years. The escape of the wretch Shiva took place through [my] carelessness, and I have to labour hard [against the Marathas] to the end of my life, [as the result of it].’ (Sarkar, *Anecdotes*, p. 55.)

*Aurangzeb's Contrasts :* All that has been stated above should go to substantiate Lane-Poole's just estimate of Aurangzeb being “ incomparably his father's superior—a wiser man, a juster king, a more clement and benevolent ruler.” “ His greatest calumniator, Manucci,” he adds, “ admits that his heart was really kind.” He further states,

"All we know of his methods of government, . . . goes to prove that his fine sentiments were really the ruling principles of his life. No act of injustice, *according to the law of Islam*, has been proved against him." Even Bernier does not fail to observe, 'yet even those who may maintain that the circumstances of country, birth and education afford no palliation of the conduct pursued by Aurang-zebe (towards his father and brothers), *must admit that this Prince is endowed with a versatile and rare genius, that he is a consummate statesman, and a great King.*' If the writer of his *Anecdotes* is correct, Shāh Jahān too appears to have foreseen that 'the resolution and intelligence of Aurangzib make it necessary that he (alone) would undertake this difficult task' (of ruling India). Dryden only translates this sentiment into verse when he writes :

'This Atlas must our sinking state uphold ;  
In counsel cool, but in performance bold :  
He sums their (his brothers') virtues in himself alone

Nevertheless, in the words of V. A. Smith, "When he is judged as a sovereign he must be pronounced a failure." Khāfi Khān also speaks of 'his *merits* as an ascetic and his *demerits* in the practical government of an empire.' Hence, 'in spite of his devotion, austerity and justice, courage, long-suffering, and sound judgment,' 'every plan and project that he formed came to little good, and every enterprise which he undertook was long in execution and failed of its object.' Aurangzeb's great weakness was, indeed, his suspiciousness, the natural corollary to which was over-centralization in administration, both civil and military. But given his energy and intellectual power, this need not have proved fatal ; it was a weakness common to his tribe—men of power and over-mastering ambition. There was a certain lack in his character, "a certain smallness of mind," a want of the generosity and openness of mind common to all his predecessors. It was on account of this that "all his self-restraint, his sense of duty, his equity, and laborious care of his people," as Lane-Poole has observed, "counted for nothing in their hearts *against his cold reserve and distrust.*" His very asceticism and economy and simplicity of life were repugnant to a nation accustomed to the splendour of Shāh Jahān's magnificent court. The mass of his subjects felt that if they must have an alien in race and religion for their king, at least let him show himself a king right royally, and shed his sovereign radiance on his subjects, even while he emptied their purses upon his stately pleasures. *This was*

*just what Aurangzib could not do. The very loftiness of his nature kept his people at a distance, while his inflexible uprightness and frigid virtue chilled their hearts."*

In the ultimate analysis, it is possible to attribute all Aurangzeb's failures and defects to his religious character. "His character," says Lane-Poole, "is that of the Puritan, with all its fiery zeal, its ascetic restraint, its self-denial, its uncompromising tenacity of righteous purpose, its high ideals of conduct and duty ; and also with its cold severity, its curbed impulses, its fanaticism, its morbid distrust of 'poor human nature,' its essential unlovableness. Aurangzib possessed many great qualities, he practised all the virtues ; *but he was lacking in the one thing needful in a leader of men : he could not win love. Such a one may administer an empire, but he cannot rule the hearts of men.*" According to the *Mirat-i Ālam* :

Aurangzeb was 'remarkable for his rigid attachment to religion.' He is a follower of the doctrines of the Imām Abu Hanifa (may God be pleased with him !), and establishes the five fundamental doctrines of the *Kanz*. Having made his ablutions, he always occupies a great part of his time in adoration of the Deity, and says the usual prayers, first in the *masjid* and then at home, both in congregation and in private, with the most heartfelt devotion. He keeps the appointed fasts on Fridays and other sacred days, and he reads the Friday prayers in the *Jāmi Masjid* with the common people of the Muhammadan faith. He keeps vigils during the whole of the sacred nights and with the light of the favour of God illumines the lamps of religion and prosperity. In privacy he never sits on the throne.

'From the dawn of his understanding he has always refrained from prohibited meats and practices, and from his great holiness has adopted nothing but that which is pure and lawful. Though he has collected at the foot of his throne those who inspire ravishment in joyous assemblies of pleasure, in the shape of singers who possess lovely voices and clever instrumental performers, and in the commencement of his reign sometimes used to hear them sing and play, and though he himself understands music well, yet now for several years past, on account of his great restraint and self-denial, and observance of the tenets of the great Imām (Shafi'i) (may God's mercy be on him !), he entirely abstains from this amusement. If any of the singers and musicians becomes ashamed of his calling, he makes an allowance for him or grants him land for his maintenance. 'He never puts on the clothes prohibited by religion, nor does he even use vessels of silver or gold. . . In consideration of their rank and merit he shows much honour and respect to the Saiyids, saints and learned men, and through his cordial and liberal exertions, the sublime doctrines of Hanifa and of our pure religion have obtained such prevalence throughout the wide territories of Hindustan as they never had in the reign of any former king.'

'Hindu writers have been entirely excluded from holding public offices, and all the worshipping places of the infidels and the great temples of these infamous people have been thrown down and destroyed in a manner which excites astonishment at the successful completion of so difficult a task. His Majesty personally teaches the sacred *kalima* to many infidels with success, and invests them with the *khilāts* and other favours. Alms and donations are given by this foundation of generosity in such abundance, that the emperors of past ages did not give even a hundredth part of the amount. In the sacred month of Ramzān sixty-thousand rupees, and in the other months less than that amount, are distributed among the poor. Several eating houses have been established in the capital and other cities at which food is served out to the helpless and poor, and in places where there were no caravanserais for the lodging of the travellers, they have been built by the Emperor. All the mosques in the empire are repaired at public expense. Imāms, criers to the daily prayers, and readers of the *khutbah*, have been appointed to each of them, so that a large sum of money has been and is still laid out in these disbursements. In all the cities and towns of this extensive country pensions and allowances and lands have been given to learned men and professors, and stipends have been fixed for scholars according to their abilities and qualifications.

'As it is a great object with this Emperor that all Muhammadans should follow the principles of the religion as expounded by the most competent law officers and the followers of the Hanifi persuasion, and as these principles, in consequence of the different opinions of the *kāzis* and *muftis* which have been delivered without any authority, could not be distinctly and clearly learnt, and as there was no book which embodied them all, and as until many books had been collected and a man had obtained sufficient leisure, means and knowledge of theological subjects he could not satisfy his enquiries on any disputed point, therefore His Majesty, the protector of the faith, determined that a body of eminently learned and able men of Hindustan should take up the voluminous and most trustworthy works which were collected in the royal library, and having made a digest of them, compose a book which might form a standard canon of the law, and afford to all an easy and available means of ascertaining the proper and authoritative interpretation. The chief conductor of this difficult undertaking was the most learned man of the time, Sheikh Nizām, and all the members of the society were very handsomely and liberally paid, so that up to the present time a sum of 200,000 rupees has been expended in this valuable compilation, which contains more than 100,000 lines. When the work (*Fatwa-i Alamgiri*) with God's pleasure, is completed, it will be for all the world the standard exposition of the law, and render every one independent of Muhammadan doctors. Another excellence attending this design is, that, with a view to afford facility to all, the possessor of perfections, Chulpi Abdu-llah, son of the great and the most celebrated Maulānā Abdu-l Hakīm of Sialkot and his several pupils have been ordered to translate the work into Persian.....

'The Emperor is perfectly acquainted with the commentaries, tradi-

tions and law. He always studies the compilations of the great Imām Muhammad Ghizali (may God's mercy be on him !), the extracts from the writings of Sheikh Sharaf Yahya Muniri (may his tomb be sanctified !), and the works of Muhi Shirāzi, and other similar books. One of the greatest excellences of this virtuous monarch is, that he has learnt the *Kurān* by heart. Though in his early youth he had committed to memory some chapters of that sacred book, yet he learnt the whole by heart after ascending the throne. He took great pains and showed much perseverance in impressing it upon his mind. He writes a very good *Naskh* hand, and has acquired perfection in this art. He has written two copies of the holy book with his own hand, and having finished and adorned them with ornaments and marginal lines, at the expense of 7,000 rupees, he sent them to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. He also wrote an excellent *Nastalik* and *Shikastah* hand. He is a very elegant writer in prose, and has acquired proficiency in versification, but agreeably to the words of God—"Poets deal in falsehoods"—he abstains from practising it. He does not like to hear verses except those which contain a moral. "To please Almighty God he never turned his eye towards a flatterer, nor gave his ear to a poet."

'The Emperor has given a very liberal education to his fortunate and noble children, who, by virtue of his attention and care, have reached to the summit of perfection, and made great advances in rectitude, devotion, and piety, and in learning the manners and customs of princes and great men. Through his instruction they have learnt the book of God by heart, obtained proficiency in the sciences and polite literature, writing the various hands, and in learning the Turki and the Persian languages.

'In like manner, the ladies of the household also, according to his orders, have learnt the fundamental and necessary tenets of religion, and all devote their time to the adoration and worship of the Deity, to reading the sacred *Kurān*, and performing virtuous and pious acts. *The excellence of character and the purity of morals of this holy monarch are beyond all expression.* As long as nature nourishes the tree of existence, and keeps the garden of the world fresh, may the plant of the prosperity of this preserver of the garden of dignity and honour continue fruitful !'

This eulogium, fulsome as it may appear, from a strictly Muslim view-point, was not altogether undeserved by Aurangzeb. "It is not," as Lane-Poole properly observes, "more adulatory than Bernier's letter to Colbert of the same period. . . . There is nothing in the portrait which is inconsistent with the whole tenor of Aurangzib's career or with the testimony of European eye-witnesses. Exaggerated as it must seem to a western reader, the Indian historian's picture of his revered Emperor does not present a single touch which cannot be traced in the writings of contemporary French and English travellers, and in the statements of other native chroniclers who

were less under the influence of the sitter for the portrait. Dr. Careri draws a precisely similar picture of the Emperor as he was in his old age in 1695."

If Aurangzeb had shared the eclecticism or liberal outlook of his forefathers, he would have strengthened instead of undermining the foundations of the Empire. He was more Hindu in blood than any of them had been ; but his Islamic conscience rebelled against all the traditions created by them in India. "For the first time in their history the Mughals beheld a rigid Muslim in their Emperor—a Muslim as sternly repressive of himself as of his people around him, *a king who was prepared to stake his throne for the sake of the faith* . . . He was no youthful enthusiast when he ascended the throne of Delhi, but a ripe man of forty, deeply experienced in the policies and prejudices of the various sections of his subjects. He must have been fully conscious of the dangerous path he was pursuing, and well aware that to run a-tilt against every Hindu sentiment, to alienate his Persian adherents, the flower of his general staff, by deliberate opposition to their cherished ideas, and to disgust his nobles by suppressing the luxury of a jovial court, was to invite revolution. Yet he chose this course, and adhered to this with unbending resolve through close on fifty years of unchallenged sovereignty. The flame of religious zeal blazed as hotly in his soul when he lay dying among the ruins of his Grand Army of the Deccan, an old man on the verge of ninety, as when, in the same fatal province, but then a youth in the springtime of life, he had thrown off the purple of viceregal state and adopted the mean garb of a mendicant fakir."

*The Ruin of Aurangzeb* : A sense of failure, defeat, and despair came over Aurangzeb in his closing years. His pathetic letters to his sons, cited already, breathe regret and disappointment ; there is also in them a note of uncertainty and disillusionment. But in his lifetime he had no misgivings as to his goal ; he had pursued what he considered to be his God-appointed task, relentlessly and with great zest. He sought to convert *Dar-al-Harb* (land of infidelity) into *Dar-al-Islam* (land of the true faith). It was ostensibly for this that he dethroned his father, murdered his brothers, exiled his son Akbar, antagonised the Rajputs, Jāts, Sikhs, and Marathas, suppressed the two Shiah kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkonda, levied the *jizya*, forbade the writing of court-chronicles,

banished music, changed the calendar to the orthodox lunar system (in place of the solar innovations), discontinued the *Nauroz* celebrations and anniversary-weighings of the Emperor against gold, silver, etc., and substituted true Hanifi Muslims in place of Hindus, Shiahs, and other infidels and heretics in his service wherever he could. Some of his measures were really good, such as the condemnation of *bhāṅg*, prohibition of liquor and gambling, forbidding of *salī*, banning of obscenities in the celebration of *Holi*, and the compulsion of public-women to choose between marriage and exile, etc. But what enraged large masses of his subjects was the wholesale destruction of places of worship, exaction of invidious taxes like the *jizya* and extra-customs duties from Hindus, and their humiliation, not merely by dismissal from high service, but also by prohibition against riding on good horses, wearing of good dresses, etc. These were not the acts of a righteous ruler or a constructive statesman, but the outbursts of blind fanaticism, unworthy of the great genius that Aurangzeb undoubtedly possessed in all other respects. Nor does any religion demand from its most devoted votaries the savage treatment that Aurangzeb needlessly meted out to his father and brothers. The fact is that, apart from his natural propensity and zeal for religion (Islam?), Aurangzeb—or better Alamgīr, the “world-grasper,” also possessed a certain strong machiavellian trait in his character which made him believe

‘How vain is virtue, which directs our ways  
Through certain danger to uncertain praise !  
Barren, and airy name ; the fortune flies,  
With thy lean train, the pious and the wise  
*The world is made for the bold impious man,*  
*Who stops at nothing, seizes all he can.*  
Justice to merit does weak aid afford ;  
She trusts her balance, and neglects her sword.  
Virtue is nice to take what’s not her own ;  
And while she long consults, the prize is gone !’

This is the key to his puzzling character which led his European contemporaries to suspect him a dissembling consummate villain.

Bernier, as we have already pointed out, speaks of him as “reserved, subtle, and a complete master of the art of dissimulation.” He further amplifies, “When at his father’s Court, he feigned a devotion which he never felt, and affected contempt for worldly grandeur while clandestinely endeavouring to pave the way to future elevation. Even when nominated Viceroy of the Deccan, he caused it to be believed that his feelings would



be better gratified if permitted to turn *fakir*, that is to say, a beggar, a Darwish, or one who had renounced the world ; that the wish nearest his heart was to pass the rest of his days in prayer or in offices of piety, and that he shrank from the cares and responsibility of government. Still his life has been one of undeviating intrigue and contrivance ; conducted, however, with such admirable skill, that every person in the Court, excepting only his brother Dārā, seemed to form an erroneous estimate of his character." Tavernier, likewise wrote, "Aurangzīb especially shows great zeal for the Sunni sect, of which he is a faithful follower, that he surpasses all his predecessors in *external observation of the law, which has even the veil by means of which he has concealed his usurpation of the kingdom....* To show himself still more zealous for the law he became a *dervish or Fakir....and under this false mantle of piety made his way cleverly to the Empire.*"

At least two of his contemporaries warned Aurangzeb of the consequences of his purblind policy—their motives we need not discuss here—; but, in the nature of things, they could expect no response. His rebellious son Akbar wrote the strongest indictment of Aurangzeb's rule ever penned by critic :

'In Your Majesty's reign the ministers have no power, the nobles enjoy no trust, the soldiers are wretchedly poor, the writers are without employment, the traders are without means, and the peasantry are down-trodden. So, too, the kingdom of the Deccan which is a spacious country and a paradise on earth, has become desolate and ruined like a hill or desert ; and the city of Burhānpur,—a mole of beauty on the cheek of earth,—has become ruined and plundered ; the city of Aurangābad, glorified by connection with Your Majesty's name, is perturbed like quicksilver at the shock and injury given by the enemy's armies. *On the Hindu tribes two calamities have descended*, (first) the exaction of the *jaziya* in the town and (second) the oppression of the enemy in the country. When such sufferings have come down upon the heads of the people from all sides, why should they not fail to pray or thank their ruler ? Men of high extraction and pure breed belonging to ancient families, have disappeared and the offices and departments of Your Majesty's government and the functions of Your counselling on the affairs of the State, are in the hands of mechanics, low people and rascals,—like weavers, soap-vendors and tailors. These men, carrying the broad cloaks of fraud under their arms, and the snare of fraud and trickery, (*to wit, the rosary*) in their hands, *roll on their tongues certain traditions and religious maxims*. Your Majesty trusts these confidants, counsellors and companions as if they were Gabriel and Michael, and places yourself helplessly under their control. And these men, showing wheat (as samples) but selling barley, by such pretexts make grass appear as a hill and a hill as grass [to you].'

Similar in import, but certainly more dignified in its tone and

sincere in its fervour, is Shivāji's letter to Aurangzeb, addressed to him after the Agra adventure.—

“ To the Emperor Alamgīr—

“ May it please Your Majesty ! That architect of the fabric of empire [Jalāluddīn] Akbar Pādishāh, reigned with full power for 52 [lunar] years. He adopted the admirable policy of universal harmony (*sulh-i-kul*) in relation to all the various sects, such as Christians, Jews, Muslims, Dādu's followers, sky-worshippers (*fulakia*), *malakia*, materialists (*ansa-ria*), atheists (*dhaharia*), Brāhman and Jain priests. The aim of his liberal heart was to cherish and protect all the people. So, he became famous under the title of *Jagat-Guru*, ‘ the World's Spiritual Guide.’ Next, the Emperor Nūruddīn Jahāngīr for 22 years spread his gracious shade on the head of the world and its dwellers, gave his heart to his friends and his hand to his work, and gained his desires. The Emperor Shāh Jahān for 32 years cast his blessed shade on the head of the world and gathered the fruit of eternal life, which is only a synonym for goodness and fair fame, as the result of his happy time on earth.

“ The state and power of these Emperors can be easily understood from the fact that *Alamgīr Pādishāh has failed and become distracted in the attempt to merely follow their political system.* They, too, had the power of levying the *jaziya* ; but they did not give place to bigotry in their hearts, as they considered all men, high and low, created by God to be [living] examples of the nature of diverse creeds and temperaments. Their kindness and benevolence endure on the pages of time as their memorial, and so prayer and praise for these [three] pure souls will dwell for ever in the hearts and tongues of mankind, among both great and small. Prosperity is the fruit of one's intentions. Therefore, their wealth and good fortune continued to increase, as God's creatures reposed in the cradle of peace and safety [under the rule], and their undertakings succeeded.

“ *But in Your Majesty's reign*, many of the forts and provinces have gone out of your possession, and the rest will soon do so too, because there will be no slackness on my part in ruining and devastating them. Your peasants are down-trodden ; the yield of every village has declined in the place of one *lakh* [of Rupees] only thousand and in the place of a thousand only ten are collected, and that too with difficulty. When poverty and beggary have made their homes in the palaces of the Emperor and the Princes, the condition of the Grandees and officers can be easily imagined. It is a reign in which the army is in a ferment, the merchants complain, the Muslims cry, the Hindus are grilled, most men lack bread at night and in the day inflame their own cheeks by slapping them [in anguish]. How can the royal spirit permit you to add the hardship of the *jaziya* to this grievous state of things ? The infamy will quickly spread from west to east and become recorded in books of history that the Emperor of Hindustan, covering the beggars' bowls, takes *jaziya* from Brāhman and Jain monks, *yogis*, *sannyāsis*, *bairāgis*, paupers, mendicants, ruined wretches, and the famine-stricken,—that his valour is

shown by attacks on the wallets of beggars, that he dashes down to the ground the name and honour of the Timūrids !

"May it please Your Majesty ! If you believe in the true Divine Book and Word of God (i.e., the *Korān*), you will find there [that God is styled] *Rabbi-ul-amin*, the Lord of all men, and not *Rabb-ul-musal-min*, the Lord of the Muhammadans only. Verily, Islam and Hinduism are terms of contrast. They are [diverse pigments] used by the true Divine Painter for blending the colours and filling in the outlines [of His picture of the entire human species.] If it be a mosque, the call to prayer is chanted in remembrance of Him. If it be a temple, the bell is rung in yearning for Him only. To show bigotry for any man's creed and practices is equivalent to altering the words of the Holy Book. To draw new lines on a picture is equivalent to finding fault with the painter .

If you imagine piety to consist in oppressing the people and terrorising the Hindus, you ought first to levy the *jaziya* from Rānā Rāj Singh, who is the head of the Hindus. Then it will not be so very difficult to collect it from me, as I am at your service. But to oppress ants and flies is far from displaying valour and spirit. I wonder at the strange fidelity of your officers that they neglect to tell you of the true state of things, but cover a blazing fire with straw ! May the sun of your royalty continue to shine above the horizon of greatness."

Alamgīr the world-grasper's reply to all the claims of reason and statesmanship was as blind and blunt as that of *Dhritarāshtra*'s unrelenting sons. He was learned, too, and could quote Sa'di, emphatically exclaiming,—

"Cease to be Kings ! Oh, Cease to be Kings !

Or determine that your dominions shall be governed only by yourselves."

Aurangzeb was thereby sowing the dragon's teeth ; but he never thought of the future. With Louis XV he only declared, "After me will come the deluge"—"*Az-ma-ast hamah fasad bāqi*" ! Mr. Pringle Kennedy has wisely observed, "What Akbar had gained, what Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān with all their vices had retained, he (Aurangzeb) lost, viz., the affection of his Hindu subjects. That this can be acquired for a Muhammadan ruler without doing injustice to his co-religionists has been shown over and over again in Indian History. And no power that has not acquired the confidence of the Hindu community can be expected to last in India. Intolerance in Aurangzeb's time meant intolerance in religious matters, but intolerance can, and at the present day often does, extend to matters not religious. Impatience at opposition, a belief that no one can be right save oneself, a feeling of contempt for all that does not

tally with one's own ideas, all these are a form of intolerance and one that at times can be seen in the statesmen of the present days. But the warning of history stands ever there, so that he who runs may read : *The English won India by pursuing the methods of Akbar, let them not lose it by imitating those of Aurangzeb.*"

It is vain to speculate what might have been if Aurangzeb had not been a fanatical *Namāzi* (as his latitudinarian brother Dārā called him), if he had befriended the Rajputs instead of alienating them, if he had not antagonised the Sikhs, Satnāmis, Jāts, and other sections of his non-Muslim subjects, and above all, if he had not roused the Marathas to deadly combat, and had won the sympathy and support of the Shiah kingdoms of Golkonda and Bijapur, etc., etc. But when we remember Aurangzeb's unquestionable merits, his administrative abilities, his benevolent intentions regarding the welfare of the peasants and Muslim subjects, his tireless energy, and his sense of the responsibilities of a monarch, we cannot help sighing with the repentant Emperor crying from his deathbed : "*I have not at all done any (true) government of the realm or cherishing of the peasantry. Life, so valuable, has gone away for nothing.....and of the future there is no hope.*"

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A D.

- 1659 Shujā defeated at Kajwah. Execution of Dārā Shukoh, Shivāji kills Afzal Khān ; takes Panhāla.
- 1660 Poona and Chākan taken by Shivāji. Guru Har Kisan succeeds Har Rai.
- 1661 Marriage of Charles II and Catharine Braganza ; Bombay ceded to England. Murād put to death.
- 1662 Mir Jumla in Assam. Dangerous illness of Aurangzeb. Oxinden President of Surat factory.
- 1663 Death of Mir Jumla in Kūch Bihar, Shayista Khān becomes governor of Bengal.
- 1664 Shivāji plunders Surat. Aurangzeb's concessions to Surat merchants. Guru Har Kisan succeeded by Teg Bahādur. French East India Co. formed by Colbert.
- 1665 Shivāji attacks English factory at Kārwar. Jai Singh and Diler Khān sent against Shivāji ; Rājgarh and Kondana invested. Shivāji's temporary submission ; treaty of Purandhar
- 1666 Bijapur invested. Death of Shāh Jahān in prison at the age of 75 years. Shivāji's escape from Agra.
- 1667 Death of Jai Singh at Burhānpur.

- 1668 Shivāji captures Sātāra, Panhāla and Rāigarh. Bombay sold to E. I. Co.
- 1669 Aurangzeb persecutes Hindus at Benares, etc.
- 1670 Aurangzeb destroys Keshav Rai temple at Mathura. Shivāji captures Purandhar ; plunders Surat again.
- 1671 Death of Shivāji's father Shāhji.
- 1672 Abul Hasan becomes Kutb Shāh at Golkonda. Ali Adil Shāh succeeded by the infant Sūkander at Bijapur.
- 1673 Satnāmi rising in Mewāt.
- 1674 Shivāji's coronation at Rāigarh ; Henry Oxinden from Bombay present.
- 1675 Jaswant Singh is sent to Kabul. Guru Teg Bahādur's execution. Guru Govind succeeds.
- 1677 Shivāji captures Jinji.
- 1678 Death of Jaswant Singh at Jamrūd ; escape of Ajit Singh and Durgādās to Jodhpur.
- 1679 Aurangzeb at Ajmer ; subjugation of Mārwar.
- 1680 Destruction of temples in Udaipur. Death of Shivāji at Rāigarh.
- 1681 Prince Akbar's flight to Sambhāji's court. Peace with Jai Singh of Udaipur.
- 1685 Aurangzeb comes to the Deccan ; attacks Golkonda.
- 1686 Annexation of Bijapur.
- 1687 Fall of Golkonda ; Abul Hasan is sent as prisoner to Daulatābād fortress.
- 1688 The Glorious Revolution in England ; end of the Stuart regime.
- 1689 Capture and execution of Sambhāji.
- 1690 Rājārām goes to Jinji.
- 1698 Jinji captured by Mughal general Zulfikār Khān after eight years' siege ; Rājārām flies to Vishālgarh.
- 1699-1700 Siege of Sātārā by the Mughals ; death of Rājārām at Simhagarh.
- 1701-4 Miraj occupied and lost. Vishālgarh, Simhagarh, Purandhar, Rājgarh, Torna, etc., also captured.
- 1705 Marathas overrun Gujarat, Khāndesh, and Mālwa. Submission of Ajit Singh and Durgādās to Aurangzeb.
- 1707 Ajit Singh and Durgādās again rebel. Death of Aurangzeb at Ahmednagar ; civil war and accession of Bahādur Shāh. Union of England and Scotland under Queen Anne.

## CHAPTER XVII

### SUNSET OF THE EMPIRE

The afternoon blaze of Aurangzeb's power had mellowed into a softer glow in the declining years of the aged Emperor. The tedious war in the Deccan had "exhausted his armies and destroyed his prestige, and no sooner was the dominating mind stilled in death than all the forces that he had sternly controlled, all the warring elements that struggled for emancipation from the grinding yoke, broke out in irrepressible tumult. Even before the end of his reign Hindustan was in confusion, and the signs of coming dissolution had appeared." So writes Lane-Poole, and adds, "Even had Aurangzib left a successor of his own mental and moral stature, it may be doubted whether the process of disintegration could have been stayed. *The disease was too far advanced for even the most heroic surgery.*" But things were not so hopeless at least during the five years of Bahādur Shāh's rule (1707-1712). As Keene suggested "As there was a period of consolidation between the first adventure (of Bābur) and the mature glory (of Shāh Jahān), so there was a period of weakness and a lapse between the glory and the fall. . . . Naturally, the steps from one period to another were not sharply defined to the eyes of the bystanders, and even now, in looking back upon them, one observes gradations like those by which one colour passes into the next upon a rainbow. The reign of Aurangzeb might appear to have been a time of recovery if it had not been a time of falling; and the accounts of his death that have been preserved do not show any feelings of despondency as to the *future of his empire* in the mind of the dying despot. *Nor was the character or the position of his successor by any means such as to give rise to any immediate alarm among those well-wishers of the State who survived their sovereign.* The emperor still gave audience, redressed grievances seated on the peacock throne; and the rulers of all provinces of the peninsula were still either his vassals or his officials." Nevertheless, "the air was full of change." It would not be improper to deem *this reign the sunset of the Empire*: the sun

of Imperial glory was still to sink below the horizon ; if the rays of its power were not piercing and sharp as in the days of Aurangzeb, they had a peculiar charm of their own. Though this moment of passing grandeur was short like a real sunset, few that enjoyed its soothing light thought of the darkness that was to follow.

*Personal History* : Muhammad Muazzam, the second son of Aurangzeb, was styled *Shāh Alam* in his father's lifetime. He was born at Burhānpur on 30th Rajab 1053 A.H. (14th October 1643). His mother was Nawāb Bāi, daughter of Rāja Rājauri of Kashmir. His elder brother, by the same mother, Prince Muhammad Sultan, having died (14th December 1676) at the age of thirty-nine, Prince Muazzam (Shāh Alam) was recognised heir-apparent. For twelve years from 1667 A.D. Shāh Alam was *Subadār* of the Deccan. About the end of 1677 he was sent to Rajputāna, against his rebellious brother Akbar (4th son of Aurangzeb, by his principal wife Dilras Bānu Begam, born at Aurangābad—11th September 1657). In 1683-4 he led his Konkan expedition, with doubtful results, and was thence directed against first Bijapur and then Golkonda. On 4th March, 1687, he was arrested with all his family for suspected contumacy with Abul Hasan, ruler of Golkonda, and kept in close confinement for seven years. He was released on 24th May, 1695, and sent as Governor to Akbarābad. Thence he was transferred to Kabul which he reached on 4th June, 1699. "For eight years the hot season was spent in Kabul and the cold weather at Jalālābad or Peshāwar or in marches through the country." He got the news of Aurangzeb's death, in his camp at Jamrud, on 22nd March, 1707, only 20 days after the event ! Then followed the race for the throne which need not be followed in detail. Aurangzeb, on his death-bed, had foreseen the impending struggle and tried in vain to avert it (1) by his last will and testament, already cited, inculcating a definite division of the Empire between his three surviving sons : and (2) by trying to keep his three sons at a safe distance, both from himself and from one another, at the time of his death. Muazzam the eldest was in distant Kabul. The other two, Kām Bakhsh and Āzam, both being near him, he had ordered to go to Bijapur and Mālwa respectively, with strict and specific instructions as to the time and route to be followed by each. But all these precautions proved futile. The civil war which was inevitable soon decided in favour of Shāh Alam. At Jajau, on 16 June, 1707, Prince Āzam was defeated and

killed in battle. Kām Bakhsh having rebelled in the south met a similar fate two years later (1709).

The principal interest of the reign of Bahādur Shāh, as Shāh Alam styled himself on his accession to the throne, centres round his relations with the Rajputs, the Marathas, and the Sikhs. We might briefly review these one after another.

*Relations with the Rajputs* : When Aurangzeb hastened to the south in pursuit of his rebellious son Akbar, he had secured no permanent peace, as we have seen, in Rajputāna. The Mughals could never thoroughly suppress the incursions and forays of the Rāthors while Aurangzeb was pre-occupied with his Deccan wars. "From the time of Jaswant Singh's death," writes Irvine, "and Alamgīr's treacherous attempt to seize his son (Ajit Singh), dates the alienation of the Rajput clans, whose loyalty had been so wisely and prudently fostered for many years by the tolerant measures of Akbar and his two successors Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān. As soon as Alamgīr, their oppressor, had expired, Ajit Singh collected his men, issued from his retreat and ejected the Muhammadans from Jodhpur and neglected to send an embassy to the new sovereign. *It was with this state of things that Bahādur Shāh had now to deal.*"

The Rajputs were determined 'to face fearful odds, for the ashes of their fathers and the temples of their gods.' In other words, they fought for (1) the abolition of *jizya*, (2) the freedom of worship and (3) the independence of Rajputs. Khāfi Khān reports the Imperial view of the situation thus :—

'Towards the end of the year 1119 the Emperor marched from Agra, with the intention of chastising the Rajputs in the vicinity of Udipur and Jodpur. From the reports of the news-writers of the province of Ajmer, and the *parganas* around Jodhpur, the following matters became known to His Majesty. . . Rāja Ajit Singh. . . had cast off his allegiance to the late Emperor, and done many improper things. After the death of Aurangzeb he again showed his disobedience and rebellion by oppressing Musulmans, forbidding the killing of cows, preventing the summons to prayer, razing the mosques which had been built after the destruction of the idol-temples in the late reign, and repairing and building anew idol-temples. He warmly supported and assisted the army of the Rāṇa of Udipur, and was closely allied with Rāja Jai Singh, whose son-in-law he was. He had carried his disaffection so far that he had not attended at Court since the accession. On the 8th Shaban (Nov. 1707) the Emperor marched to punish this rebel and his tribe, by way of Amber, the native land of Jai Singh, between Ajmir and Chitor.'



Rāṇa Amar Singh of Udaipur averted the threatened blow by sending his brother, Bakht Singh, to Agra with a letter of congratulation, 100 gold coins, 1000 rupees, two horses with gold mounted trappings, an elephant, nine swords, and other productions of his country. Jodhpur, the storm centre of the trouble, was ordered to be besieged; and Amber, the capital of the Kachhwahas, was annexed (January, 1708) though later (April, 1708) it was made over to Bijai Singh, the younger brother of Jai Singh (the erstwhile ruler). The title of *Mirza Rāja* was conferred upon the new prince. The march towards Jodhpur in the meanwhile continued. Soon after news arrived of (1) the flight of Rāṇa Amar Singh of Udaipur, and (2) of the rebellion of Prince Kām Bakhsh. The latter event has already been referred to. After the fall of Mairtha Ajit Singh capitulated. Between 10th March and 23rd April, 1708, the title of *Mahārāja* and the rank of 3500 *zāt* and 3000 horse, a standard, and kettledrums, were conferred upon him, with other honours for his four sons. "The difficulty with Jodhpur being thus, to all appearance, satisfactorily disposed of, the Emperor retraced his steps from Mairtha and returned to Ajmer." Suitable gifts were sent to Rāṇa Amar Singh (who had fled) through his brother Bakht Singh with a reassuring letter bidding him not to be frightened but remain in peace in his own abode.

On 30th April, when the Emperor was marching south against Kām Bakhsh, it was again reported that Mahārāja Ajit Singh, Rāja Jai Singh Kachhwaha, and Durgādās Rāthor—who had been obliged to follow the camp—had fled. But the exigencies of the situation compelled Bahādur Shāh to concentrate on the greater challenge from the south. All efforts made by the Imperial officers in the north having proved ineffective against the combination of the Rajput princes, conciliatory measures were for the time being adopted by Bahādur Shāh.

That the peace was so humiliating to the Rajputs is indicated by the following account given by Elphinstone:—"While he was on his march against Cambakhsh, he had endeavoured to make a settlement of his disputes with the Rajputs: He had entered into a treaty with the Rāṇa of Oudipur, *restoring all conquests, re-establishing religious affairs on the footing on which they stood in Akbar's time, releasing the Rāṇa from the obligation to furnish a contingent in the Deccan*, and, in fact, 'acknowledging his entire independence in everything but the name.' (Tod's *Rājasthān*, vol. 1, p. 395)." When Bahādur Shāh returned north, after the

defeat of Kām Bakhsh, he was faced with a new peril, viz. the Sikh rising ; and hence, according to Elphinstone, " All their (Rajputs') demands were agreed to, and they were probably left on the same footing as the Rāṇa of Oudipur."

*Relations with the Marathas :* The importance of the Mughal-Maratha relations in the reign of Bahādur Shāh consists primarily in two happenings : (1) the release of Shāhu from the Mughal custody ; and (2) the Imperial recognition of the Maratha claims to *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* in the Deccan. Regarding the former it is necessary to correct the mistake committed by V. A. Smith in the following statement : "*Bahādur Shāh*," he writes "*acting on the astute advice of Zulfikār Khān, released Shāhu* (Shivāji II), the great Shivāji's grandson, who had been educated at Court, and sent him back to his own country, then under the government of Tārā Bāi."

Shāhu was not in Bahādur Shāh's custody, but in Aurangzeb's camp at the time of the latter's death. Āzam Shāh took Shāhu with him when he marched north towards the capital. He was released by Āzam, no doubt as suggested by Zulfikār Khān, in May 1707, at Doraha (near Nemawar, north of the Narmada), before the battle of Jajau. Khāfi Khān makes mention of this in the following terms :

'Zulfikār Khān *Nusrat Jang* was very intimate with Sāhu, grandson of Shivāji, and had long been interested in his affairs. He now persuaded *Āzam Shāh* to set this Sāhu at liberty, along with several persons who were his friends and companions. Many Maharatta *sardārs*, who through necessity had deceitfully joined themselves to the party of Rāṇi Tārā Bāi, widow of Rājārām, now came and joined Rāja Sāhu.'

Rājārām had demanded from Aurangzeb the release of Shāhu as a condition of peace, but Aurangzeb had refused to set him at liberty. Now the exigencies of the situation made such an act politic and expedient. Tārā Bāi, who was the soul of the Maratha resistance, had been fighting after all for the ascendancy of her own son. The release of Shāhu was therefore calculated to involve Mahārāshtra in a civil war. This was extremely desirable, inasmuch as the Mughal Princes and the Imperial armies were engaged in the fight for the throne. " Thus Shāhu released," argued Zu-l fikār Khān " would be a more potent weapon against the Marathas than Shāhu in captivity." As a condition of his release, however, Shāhu had agreed to rule as a feudatory of Āzam Shāh and to leave behind him as hostages

his mother Yesubai, his wife, his mistress (Virubai), and his illegitimate half brother Madansing. "On the other hand Āzam Shāh had granted Shāhu the *Sardeshmukhi* and the *Chauth* over the six Deccan subhas (Khāndesh, Berar, Aurangābad, Bedar, Haidarābad or Golkonda and Bijapur). Shāhu was also appointed governor of Gondwana, Guzerat and Tanjore during good behaviour." When Badādūr Shāh ascended the throne, Shāhu sent his *vakil*, Rāybhānji Bhonsla, to the Imperial Court to pay his homage; and the new Emperor confirmed him in his possessions and created him *mansabdār* of ten thousand horse. But Tārā Bāi disputed the legitimacy and claims of Shāhu before the Imperial Court, through Munim Khān, and 'asked for a *firmān* in the name of her son, granting the nine rupees (per cent.) of the *sardeshmukhi*, without any reference to the *chauth*, for which he would suppress other insurgents and restore order in the country. Samsam-ud daula Zu-l fikār Khān took the side of Rāja Sāhu, and a great contention upon the matter arose between the two ministers. The King, in his extreme good nature, had resolved in his heart that he would not reject the petition of any one, whether of low or high degree. The complainants and defendants made their statements to His Majesty, *and although they differed as much as morning and evening, each was accepted*, and an order of consent was given. So in this matter of the *sardeshmukhi*, *firmāns* were directed to be given in compliance with the requests both of Munim Khān and Zu-l fikār Khān; but in consequence of the quarrel between these two nobles, the orders about the *sardeshmukhi* remained inoperative.'

*Relations with the Sikhs* : In the previous chapter we brought the history of the Sikhs down to the death of Guru Govind, the tenth and last *Guru*, who had for some strategic or other reasons submitted to Bahādūr Shāh during the latter's struggle against his recalcitrant brothers. Whatever the circumstances attending the murder of Guru Govind, it is certain that he had eminently succeeded in 'teaching the sparrow to strike the eagle;' he had "effectually roused the dormant energies of a vanquished people, and filled them with a lofty although fitful longing for social freedom and national ascendancy, the proper adjuncts of that purity of worship which had been preached by Nānak." He had lost all his children in the struggle and at the time of his death (1708) entrusted the *Khālsa* to God, the never-dying. He inculcated on his following : "*He who wishes to behold the Guru, let him search the Granth of Nānak. The Guru*

*will dwell with the Khālṣa ; be firm and be faithful : wherever five Sikhs are gathered together there will I also be present."*

The leadership of the Sikhs after this was assumed by an adventurer whose origin and personality are a subject of controversy. "On the death of Govind," says Irvine, "his family and followers brought forward a man. who exactly resembled the deceased. It is not very clear who this man was ; he is generally spoken of as *Banda* (the slave), or as the *False Guru* . . . Some say he was a Bairagi faqir, who for many years had been the intimate friend of Guru Govind." Whatever may be the truth as to his origin and antecedents, concludes Irvine, "this man was now sent off secretly from the Dakhn to Hindustan. At the same time letters were written to the Punjab, informing the disciples, that their Guru had been slain in the Emperor's camp by the dagger of an Afghan. But just before his death, their leader had announced that in a short time, through the power of transmigration, he would appear again clothed with sovereignty, and whenever he should raise the standard of independence, they would by joining him secure prosperity in this world and salvation in the next."

Banda, taking advantage of the distracted state of the Empire, soon became a terror to the Musalmans in the Punjab, especially in Sirhind. It was to crush this danger that threatened the very heart of the Empire, that Bahādur Shāh felt compelled to conclude his hostilities with the Rajputs, and hasten further north. Various attempts made by Imperial officers to capture this Robinhood ended in failure. Banda could not be captured during the life time of Bahādur Shāh. The Emperor's impotent rage was visited upon Khān-khānan. In his mad search after the Sikh leader, the Emperor ordered that all Khatris and Jāts in his army, at the Court, and in public offices, should shave off their beards ! 'A great many of them thus had to submit to what they considered the disgrace of being shaved, and for a few days the barbers were very busy. Some men of name and position committed suicide to save the honour of their beards.'

The Sikhs continued to grow strong during the period of confusion that surrounded the death of Bahādur Shāh (1712) and later. Banda was not captured until after the accession of the Emperor Farrukh-siyar (1716).

*Conclusion :* Bahādur Shāh's is the last reign that is reminiscent of the glories of the Great Mughals ; after him came the Nightfall of the Empire, and the rule of 'her sister chaos.' The reign was short, lasting less than five years, but in foreign relations it was marked by a statesmanship greater than his father's. His

treatment of the Rajputs and the Marathas was certainly wiser than that of Aurangzeb. He had won over Guru Govind, as Aurangzeb might have done with Shivāji, had he been wiser. It is vain to speculate how he would have treated Banda if he had been really captured. But then the effects of growing senility were already visible. Otherwise Shāh Ālam's rule was marked by a sanity and liberalism not unworthy of a descendant of the great Akbar. But these traits, unfortunately, were leaning on the side of weakness with the increasing weight of years. On 18 February 1711 when the Emperor had passed his 70th lunar year, there was a great change perceptible in him, and soon after this the Emperor died, and was buried near the tomb of Kutbu-d dīn, four or five *kos* from Delhi. He had reigned four years and two months. At the end of the four years the treasure of thirteen *lacs* of rupees, to which he succeeded, had all been given away. The income of the Empire during his reign was insufficient to meet the expenses, and consequently there was great parsimony shown in the Government establishments, but especially in the royal household, so much so that money was received every day from the treasure of Prince Azimu-sh Shān to keep things going."

Bahādur Shāh had under him some able officers who would have made a mark in any age. Foremost among these was the prime-minister Munim Khān with whose help in the war of succession Bahādur Shāh had come to the throne. Of like reputation and standing was Ghāziū-d dīn Khān Firoz Jang, 'who had acquired a most powerful influence in the Dakhin, and was chief of the Turāni Mughals. . . . . He was an able statesman of long experience, who, though blind of sight, could clearly perceive the mind of man.' From the Deccan, when Zu-l fikār Khān took charge of that province, Ghāziū-d dīn was transferred to Ahmedābad, where his death occurred. He is to be remembered, especially, as the father of his more famous son, Chinkilich Khān, the future Nizāmu-l Mulk and founder of the present Haidarābad State. The *Siyar-ul Mutākherin* gives a good account of the other important nobles, and also of how the Emperor's good nature was carried to the length of absurdity.

'Zul-fikār Khān, the generalissimo, was honoured with the title and office of Amir-ul-omrah and appointed viceroy of the Deckan, comprehending all the provinces already conquered or to be conquered hereafter. This was a charge of vast importance, for which he was eminently qualified, for no other man at that time would have been able to rule countries so

newly conquered and so refractory. The new viceroy, after having settled to his mind the military and financial affairs of his Government, returned to court; having left as his lieutenant an Afghan nobleman, called Dāud Khān Peni, a man famed in those countries for his riches, his bodily strength and his personal prowess; and who had rendered himself of so much importance that there were no noblemen in (the) Deckan who could be compared with him. He was made the director of all political affairs, as also of the finance department, with full liberty to undertake any military expedition which he should deem advisable. Zul-fikār Khān, after having eased his mind of so great a burthen, went to court, where he applied himself sedulously in aiding to introduce order through every part of the empire.

'The provinces of Bengal, Orissa, Azimābad (Patna) and Ilahābad had hitherto been governed by Azim-ush-shān, the emperor's second son, and it was thought politic to continue those countries under the same administration; an arrangement which put it in that prince's power to reward two illustrious nobles who had rendered him many important services, and had distinguished themselves in the great battle of Acberābad (Jajau). These were Seid Abdullah Khān and Seid Hussein Ali Khān, sons of the famous Seid Abdullah Khān, so much revered in Ajmir under the name of Mia Khān. On the elder, Abdullah Khān, he conferred the Government of Ilahābad; and he gave that of Azimābad (Patna) to the younger, Hussein Ali Khān.\* At the same time Jafar Khān was entrusted with the provinces of Bengal and Orissa, in which he had hitherto acted as minister of finance. After these arrangements the prince took up his residence at his father's court, where he exercised great influence.'

The services of these able men were unfortunately neutralised by Bahādur Shāh's very good nature. 'The emperor, who was exceedingly good-natured,' continues the same writer, 'and mild even to a fault, having remembered a vow which he had once made to the Creator of all things, that if ever he should ascend the throne he would never deny any man's request, now wanted to act up to the letter of this vow: accordingly, dignities, titles, and employments were lavished so indiscriminately, that they lost much of their value, and ceased to be deemed marks of honour or distinction.' 'For example,' says Ghulām Husain, 'one of the dog-keepers, who applied for a title, was honoured with that distinction by the King's own private order. . . . and he accordingly became known hereafter by the title of Lord Dog-keeper to the great astonishment of the world, and was pointed at as he passed through the streets, people saying to each other, "There goes my

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\* These were the famous *Saiyid brothers* who were soon to play the rôle of king-makers.

Lord Dog-keeper," till at length he was induced to give money to people to refrain from molesting him on the highway, but it had little effect.' Bahādur Shāh's attitude towards the Christians and Europeans was in keeping with his liberal outlook in all other matters. Even under Aurangzeb, despite his fanaticism, the Europeans had not suffered *per se* on account of their religion. When the *jizya* was imposed upon all non-Muslims, in 1679, a representation was made by the Fathers. "Interviews were sought with influential men in the city and the Jesuits supported their requests with presents of curiosities from Europe. Their efforts were so far successful that the tax at Agra, including arrears, was remitted by the local authorities, but in order to get the concession on a proper footing the Viceroy at Goa was urged to represent the matter to Aurangzeb himself." Father Magalhaens was deputed for the purpose, in 1686, and "the King acceded to his request that all Christians in the Empire should be exempted from the *jizya*." Though this order was whittled down in practice by unsympathetic officers, the exemptions specified in particular cases were continued by Bahādur Shāh on his accession in 1707. "Similar exemption was again granted by Farrukh-siyar in 1718 and by Mahamad Shāh in 1726 on the same ground, namely that the Fathers were Christian ascetics (*fuqurāl quam Isāi*'). We have no record, however, of any confirmation of the general exemption of the Christian community." In 1711 the Dutch East India Company had sent an Embassy to the Court of Bahādur Shāh. But before it could achieve anything the Emperor died. Civil war again broke out and the Dutch withdrew for safety.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

A.D.

- 1707      Return of Shāhu to Mahārāshtra. Fort William made independent of Madras.
- 1708-9    Revolt and death of Kām Bakhsh. Guru Govind Singh assassinated at Nānder. Sikh revolt under Banda (1708-16). Peace with Rajputāna.
- 1709      The *Khutbah* risings. Shāhu's agreement with Bahādur Shāh. Jesuits destroy Hindu temple at Pondicherry.
- 1711-12   Dutch Embassy to Bahādur Shāh.
- 1712      Death of Bahādur Shāh ; war of succession ; accession of Jahāndar Shāh.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### NIGHTFALL OF THE EMPIRE

The history of the Empire which we have so far traced has had a unity of its own, despite the apparent variety in the personal characters of the Emperors themselves. Not to speak of Bābur and Humāyun, whose work might be regarded as that of pioneers, "Akbar, the real founder of the empire," as Smith says, "was a man truly great, notwithstanding his frailties, and during his long personal reign of forty-five years (1560-1605) was able to build up an organization strong enough to survive twenty-two years of Jahāngīr's feeble rule. Shāh Jahān, a stern, ruthless man, kept a firm hand on the reins for thirty years, and was followed by Aurangzeb, who maintained the system more or less in working order for almost fifty years longer. Thus, for a century and a half, from 1560-1707, the empire was preserved by a succession of four sovereigns, the length of whose reigns averaged thirty-four (thirty-seven?) years, a very unusual combination. Even Jahāngīr, the weakest of the four, was no fool. The three others were men of unusual ability." Bahādur Shāh, as we have noticed, does not consort ill with his predecessors, except in the very short duration of his reign. But this could not have been otherwise in the nature of things. His successors were definitely cast in an inferior mould, and were undoubtedly of poorer clay. No wonder, therefore, that "when the breath left his body," no member of the house of Timūr remained in India "who was fit to take the helm of the ship of state, which soon drifted on the rocks." The degraded wretches that "polluted the throne of Akbar" deserve only a passing notice; the rest of our history is filled with the tragedy of the disruption of the splendid fabric reared and fostered by the great Mughals. The *faineant* Emperors appear only like ghouls in the thickening gloom of the night. The real makers of the history of the future, except in a negative sense, are no longer the descendants of Bābur, but their rivals and enemies. We might trace the following outlines of the fallen angels in the 'darkness (still) visible':—



## THE FAINEANT EMPERORS :

(1) Jahāndar Shāh (1712-13) ; (2) Farrukh-siyar (1713-19) ; (3) Rafiu-d Darajat, Neku-siyar, and Rafiu-d Daula (1719) ; (4) Muhammad Shāh [and Sultan Ibrāhim—Shāh Jahān Sāni (II)—1720] (1719-48) ; (5) Ahmad Shāh (1748-54) ; (6) Alamgīr II (1754-9) ; (7) Shāh Ālam II (1759-1806) ; Akbar II (1806-37) ; Bahādur Shāh II (1837-57).

'As the splendour and delight of the garden of this world and the verdure and fruitfulness of the fields of this earth, depend upon the flow of the stream of the equity and justice of Kings, so the withering of the trees of this world is caused by the hot winds of the negligence and carelessness of rulers and dissensions among well-disposed nobles,' writes Rustam Ali, author of the *Tarikh-i Hindi*. As a result of this, he continues. 'In a short time, many of the officers of this kingdom put their feet from the path of obedience to the sovereign and many of the infidels, rebels, tyrants and enemies stretched out the hands of rapacity and extortion upon the weaker tributaries and the poor subjects. Great disorders arose in the country.'

But before we turn to examine the nature of these disorders it will be useful to review the characters and conduct of the Emperors themselves. Although wars of succession were a feature common to both the periods, what is more striking is the contrast between the *Greater* and the *Later* Mughals in the number and duration of the sovereigns, before and after the death of Aurangzeb : from 1526-1707, a period of very near *two centuries*, there were only *six* rulers of the house of Timūr. From the death of Aurangzeb to the third battle of Pānipat (1707-61), only a little over *half a century*, no less than *ten* members of that family wore the crown. This was not merely accidental. Jahāndar and Farrukh-siyar were strangled to death ; Rafiu-d Darajat and Neku-siyar died in imprisonment, virtual or real, after a few weeks' "rule." Rafiu-d Daula died of mental and physical maladies within three months of his coronation. Muhammad Shāh, though he ruled longer and died a 'natural' death his system had been shattered by excessive opium-eating and self-indulgence. Sultan Ibrāhim (Shāh Jahān II) was proclaimed Emperor only for a few days. Ahmad Shāh was deposed, imprisoned and blinded, Alamgīr II was murdered, and Shāh Ālam II was disgraced and driven from his ancestral capital. The key to these catastrophes must be found in the characters of these 'sovereigns.'

Bahādur Shāh left behind him four sons to contend for his throne. Iradat Khān gives the following account of them :—

(1) 'Muizzu-d dīn Jahāndar Shāh, the eldest, was a *weak man, devoted to pleasure, who gave himself no trouble about State affairs, or to gain the attachment of any of the nobility*.. (2) Azimu-sh Shāh, the second son, was a statesman of winning manners... (He was governor of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa) : and though in the late battle (of Jajau) he had performed great service, yet he was suspected by his father and dreaded as a rival ; but to relate the causes would be useless prolixity. (3) Rafiu-sh Shāh, the private companion and favourite of his father, was a prince of quick parts, a great proficient in religious learning, a fine writer, with much knowledge in the law, but at the same time addicted to pleasure, particularly fond of music, and the pomp of courtly show. He paid no attention to public affairs or even those of his own household. (4) Khujista-akhtar Jahān Shāh had the greatest share of all the princes in the management of affairs, before his father's accession to the throne, and afterwards the whole administration of the empire was influenced by him. He had the closest friendship and connexion with Munim Khān, who, by his interest was appointed *wazir*.'

We need not dwell on the monotonous details of the war of succession between the above four princes. As a result :

*Jahāndar Shāh* : 'Jahandar, being freed from his three brothers, became the monarch of Hindustan. He sent M. Karīm and Prince Humāyun Bakht, who were only nine or ten years old, the two sons of Jahān Shāh, and the sons of Rafiu-sh Shāh, to the fort of Delhi . . . . . Mahābat Khān and . . . other *amirs*, more than twenty in number, were ordered to be confined in chains, and some were put to the rack and other tortures. Their houses also were seized. (Prince M. Karim, having attempted escape, was put to death).

'In the brief reign of Jahāndar, violence and debauchery had full sway. It was a fine time for minstrels and singers and all the tribes of dancers and actors. There seemed to be likelihood that *Kazis* should turn toss-pots, and *muftis* become tipplers. All the brothers and relatives, close and distant, of *Lāl Kunwar*, received *mansabs* of four or five thousand, presents of elephants, drums and jewels, and were raised to dignity in their tribes. Worthy, talented, and learned men were driven away, and bold impudent wits and tellers of facetious anecdotes gathered round.' As Kamwar Khān put it, '*The owl dwelt in the eagle's nest, and the crow took the place of the nightingale.*' The frivolities of the Court soon became notorious, and all respect for and fear of the sovereign ceased.

While the central government at Delhi was in this state of disorganisation and disorder, a claimant to the throne arose in the person of Muhammad Farrukh-siyar, the second (but eldest surviving) son of the late Azimu-sh Shāh.

*Farrukh-siyar* : When Azimu-sh Shāh was called to support the claims of his father, Bahādur Shāh, he had left Bengal in the charge of Farrukh-siyar (1707). When Bahādur Shāh died, Farrukh immediately proclaimed his father Azim Emperor (March, 1712). But when he heard of his father's death, in April 1712, he was so dejected that he even contemplated suicide. However, his mother intervened saying, 'If he launched his boat on stormy waters it would, if God were gracious, reach the bank in safety. After all, what was life but a matter of a few days? Why not run the risk?' Thereupon Farrukh-siyar took heart and proclaimed himself Emperor, going through the usual ceremonies, causing the *khutbah* to be read and coins struck in his own name. The Civil war that ensued consequently ended tragically for Jahāndar Shāh, the victory of Farrukh-siyar being due to the help rendered to him by the two Saiyid brothers, Abdullah Khān and Husain Āli Khān. Jahāndar was defeated, imprisoned, and finally murdered (February 1713).

'As he did not die at once, a Mughal, with his heavy-heeled shoes, kicked him several times in a vulnerable place and finished him off . . . The body was then thrown into an open litter (*miyana*) and the head placed on a tray (*khwan*). Half an hour after nightfall, they reached the camp with the lifeless head and trunk and laid them at the entrance to the Emperor's (*Farrukh-siyar's*) tents, alongside the body of Zu-l-fikār Khān' (who was also executed at the same time).

Such was the fate of 'Jahāndar Shāh, Emperor of the World, Lord of the Conjunctions,' as his coins name him. "*He was the first sovereign of the house of Taimūr,*" declares Irvine, "*who proved himself absolutely unfitted to rule.*"

The events described above in themselves afford a lurid commentary on the character of both the new sovereign and his rule. Khāfi Khān adds :

'Farrukh-siyar had no will of his own. He was young, inexperienced in business and inattentive to business of State. He had grown up in Bengal, far away from his grandfather and father. *He was entirely dependent on the opinions of others, for he had no resolution or discretion.* By the help of fortune he had seized the crown. The timidity of his character contrasted with the vigour of the race of Timūr, and *he was not cautious in listening to the words of artful men.* From the beginning of his reign he himself brought his troubles on himself. One fault he committed at the outset of his reign, in appointing Saiyid Abdullah, a Saiyid of Barha, to the office of *Wazir*.

As the result of his own weakness and follies Farrukh-siyar was

deposed, imprisoned, blinded, and ultimately killed in a very ignominious manner, on 28 April, 1719. The hostile nobles met and declared for his deposition on the ground that Farrukh-siyar had 'forfeited all right to the throne by his want of discretion and his promotion of low fellows.'

The lot for a successor fell on Prince Bidar Dil, son of Bidar Bakht, grandson of Aurangzeb, 'who was known as having the best understanding among all the Princes.' A riot had already broken out outside the palace. The nobles were in a desperate hurry. The women in the royal apartments, fearing the wholesale massacre of all the Princes, barred the doors and hid them. The entrance was forced and the nominated Prince was called for, but his mother wept and wailed. The blind search ended in catching hold of Rafiu-d Darajat, son of Rafiu-sh Shān, son of Bahādur Shāh. This youth was brought as he had been found, wearing his ordinary clothes. They put him on the gorgeous Peacock Throne, and went through the usual ceremonial.

From the deposition of Farrukh-siyar (28 February 1719) to the accession of Muhammad Shāh (24 September 1719), three Princes were raised to the throne, like bubbles of water rising to the surface, only to end their ephemeral existence in a very short time. Their meteoric 'reigns' may be passed over.

One notable event that took place in this reign was the withdrawal of Ajit Singh's daughter (Farrukh-siyar's widow) from the Imperial seraglio and her reconversion to Hinduism. Khāfi Khān alludes to this in the following terms :—

'At this time Mahārāja Ajit Singh took back the Mahārāni, his daughter, who had been married to Farrukh-siyar, with all her jewels and treasure and valuables, amounting to *a kror* of rupees in value. According to report he made her throw off her Musulman dress, dismissed her Muhammadan attendants, and sent her to her native country (Jodhpur) ... In the reign of no former Emperor had any Rāja been so presumptuous as to take his daughter after she had been married to a king and admitted to the honour of Islam.'

*Muhammad Shāh* : When the life of the last of the three puppet princes was despaired of, Saiyid Abdullah sent for another Prince from Fathpur. This was Prince Muhammad Roshān Akhtar, son of Jahān Shāh, and grandson of Aurangzeb. He was then only eighteen years of age. Since the death of Jahāndar Shāh, he had lived with his mother, who is described by Khāfi Khān as a noble lady 'well acquainted with State business,' and as 'a woman of much intelligence and tact,'—in the fort of Delhi. 'He was a

good-looking young man, with many good qualities, and of excellent intelligence.'

'On the 11th Zi-l ka'da, 1113 A. H. (Sept. 1719 A. D.) he reached Fathpur, and on the 15th of that month he ascended the throne.... Money was struck in the name of *Abu-l Muzzāffar Nāsirud-dīn Muhammad Shāh Bādshāh-i Ghāzi*, and his name was read in the *khutbah*, as Emperor of Hindustan, in the mosques.... It was settled that the beginning of his reign should date from the deposition of Farrukh-siyar, and should be so entered in the Government records. The *nāzirs* and all the officers and servants around the Emperor were, as before, the servants of Saiyid Abdullah. When the young Emperor went out for a ride, he was surrounded, as with a halo, by numbers of the Saiyid's trusted adherents; and when occasionally, in the course of two or three months, he went out hunting, or for an excursion into the country, they went with him and brought him back.'

Speaking of the restraints of the Saiyids, Ghulām Husain writes, '*All this was patiently submitted to by the young emperor, who, sensible of the delicacy of his situation, made no opposition to the vezir's pleasure, and had the good sense to shew him every mark of deference and regard.*' Yet the writer does not fail to observe, '*This did not effect the least abatement of the jealousy with which he was watched; for whenever he went abroad, which happened once or twice a month, for the purpose of taking an airing, the king was encircled by a body of Saiyids, who did not lose sight of him a moment, nor ever carry him farther than the seats and gardens in the suburbs, which at most are one or two coss from the palace, and they always came back before the dusk of the evening.*' According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, though Muhammad Shāh was "a mere cypher in respect of his public duties, there were some redeeming traits in his private character. Naturally timid and wavering, he was also free from insolent pride, caprice and love of wanton cruelty.... He never gave his consent to shedding blood or doing harm to God's creatures. In his reign the people passed their lives in ease, and the empire outwardly retained its dignity and prestige. The foundations of the *Delhi monarchy* were really rotten, but *Muhammad Shāh* by his cleverness kept them standing. He may be called the last of the rulers of *Bābur's* line, as after him the kingship had nothing but the name left to it."

Muhammad Shāh is certainly memorable as the last Mughal Emperor who sat on the *Peacock Throne* of Shāh Jahān. "Students of history will note his reign," observes Keene, "as the period in

which were founded all the modern powers of the Indian peninsula. It seemed as though the empire, like some of the lower animals, was about to reproduce its life by fissiparous generation." The famous invasion of Nādir Shāh took place during this reign, and as the result of the shock he received from the death of his *wazir*, Kamru-d dīn Khān, Muhammad Shāh died on the 15 April, 1748.

*Ibrāhīm Shāh* : Before we proceed to Ahmad Shāh, Muhammad's son and successor, we should briefly notice the attempt made by Saiyid Abdullah Khān Barha to set up another rival on the throne. This was Muhammad Ibrāhīm, third son of Bahādur Shāh's eldest son Rafiū-sh Shān. He was about twenty-three years of age at the time he was sent for (1720) to contend for the crown against Muhammad Shāh. Muhammad Shāh had hardly been a year on the throne, when differences arose between him and the Saiyids. As a result of this Saiyid Husain Āli Khān Barha was murdered on 8th October 1720, and the news of it reached his elder brother only eighteen hours later. Though Abdullah Khān moved cautiously in the matter, he made up his mind to replace Muhammad Shāh, if possible, by another Prince. A search was accordingly made in the royal apartments. But, as had happened on a previous occasion,

'The young men had the door shut against the envoys . . . ; but after a good deal of pressing they admitted them and asked the reason of their coming ; and when they were informed of it, they gave a sharp answer, flatly refusing. It is reported that after the envoys returned unsuccessful, they went to Neku-siyar, and received the same answer. Next they went to Sultan Ibrāhīm, son of Rafiū-sh Shān, and urged him to accept the proposition, saying that his acceptance would save the lives of the party of the Saiyids. After some conversation he consented. On 15 Oct., 1720, Sultan Muhammad Ibrāhīm was raised to the throne with the title of Abu-l Fath Zahiru-d dīn Muhammad Ibrāhīm. Two days afterwards Saiyid Abdullah arrived and paid his homage. He received the title of *Ghāziu-d dīn Ghalib Jang*, the position of *Amiru-l umra* with the duties of *Mīr-bakhshi*, and a *mansab* of 8000.

But this proved a short-lived triumph as Muhammad Shāh overthrew his rival in battle and continued to reign, as stated before, till 1748.

*Ahmad Shah* : Ahmad Shāh was the only son of his father Muhammad Shāh. 'He gave himself up to useless pursuits, to pleasure and enjoyment,' says the *Tarikhi-i Alamgīr Sāni*, "and his reign was brought to an end (after 6 years, 3 months and 9 days)

by the enmity which he showed to Nizāmu-l Mulk Asaf Jāh (Ghāziu-dīn Khān), at the instigation of his *wazīr* the Khān-khānān and his mother Udham Bai.' Greater details are afforded by the *Tarikh-i Ahmad Shāh* :

'When the prince succeeded his father on the throne of Delhi, he took the title of *Mujāhidu-d dīn Ahmad Shāh Ghāzī*, and in the prayers and on the coins these titles were adopted, and to his deceased parent he gave the title of *Hazrat Firdaus Aramgah*. Ahmad Shāh was not a man of great intellect ; all the period of his youth till manhood had been spent in the *harem*, and he had absolutely no experience whatever of the affairs of a kingdom, or of the cares of government. Besides this, he was surrounded by all kinds of youthful pleasures, which every person, seeing the turn of his mind, was anxious to display before him to entice his fancy. As a natural consequence, he gave himself up entirely to pastime and sports, and bestowed no thought on the weighty affairs of the kingdom. *To manage a country and wield a sceptre is a matter full of difficulty, and until an Emperor understands thoroughly himself the good and bad tendency of every measure, he cannot be fit to rule.* For this reason Ahmad Shāh was unable to govern the empire entrusted to him.

'Consequently the administration grew very weak and degraded ; the pillars of the State were daily shaken ; the Emperor never inquired about the realm, the soldiery, or the treasury,—the three foundations of an empire... He became so absorbed in pleasure that a whole *kos* (an area of four sq. miles) was turned into a women's preserve by excluding all males from it, and there the Emperor used to disport himself in female company for a week or a month in bower and park.'

The events of this reign will be narrated later. The end of it was of a piece with the character of the Emperor here described. When Ghāziu-d dīn set himself up as the *wazīr* (5 June, 1754) he convened the Mughal Darbār, "from which, with his usual address, he contrived to obtain as a vote of the cabinet what was doubtless the suggestion of his own unprincipled ambition. 'This Emperor,' said the assembled nobles, 'has shown his unfitness for rule. He is unable to cope with the Marāthas : he is false and fickle towards his friends. Let him be deposed and a worthier son of Timūr raised to the throne.' This resolution was immediately acted upon ; the unfortunate monarch was blinded and consigned to the State prison of Salimgarh, adjoining the palace ; and a son of Jahāndar Shāh, the competitor of Farokhsīar, proclaimed Emperor under the sounding title of Alamgīr II, July 1754 A.D."

*Alamgīr II* : Muhammad Ali Khān relates how 'they waited upon the royal princes who were in confinement, to select one to

ascend the throne. But the princes were afraid, and no one consented. At length after much trouble, Sultan Azizu-d dīn, son of Jahāndar Shāh, son of Bahādur Shāh, who during his seclusion had devoted himself to theological science, was prevailed upon to accept the crown, with the title of *Azizu-d dīn Muhammad Alamgīr Sāni* (II), on the 10 Sha'ban, 1167 A.H. Ghāziu-d dīn Khān Imādu-l Mulk was made *wazīr*.' This prince met his death sooner than his predecessors. He was something of a religious character. With this bait he was enticed to his doom.

It was reported to him that 'a most saintly *derwesh* from Kandahār had arrived in the city, who was lodged in the *kotila* of Fīrūz Shāh, and that he was well worth seeing. The Emperor, who was very fond of visiting *fakirs*, and particularly such an one as had come from the country of Ahmad Shāh (Abdāli), became extremely desirous of seeing him, and went to him almost unattended. When he reached the appointed place, he stopped at the door of the chamber where his assassins were concealed, and Mahdi Āli Khān relieved him of the sword which he had in his hand, and put it by. As he entered the house the curtains were down and fastened to the ground. Upon this the myrmidons of Imādu-l Mulk surrounded him and took him prisoner; and having taken the sword from him, placed him, in a *palankin*, and sent him back to the royal prison. Some evil-minded Mughals were expecting the Emperor in the chamber, and when they found him there unattended and alone, they jumped up, and inflicting on him repeated wounds with their daggers, brought him to the ground, and then threw his body out of the window, stripped of all the clothes and left the corpse stark naked. After lying on the ground for eighteen hours, his body was taken up by order of Mahdi Āli Khān, and buried in the sepulchre of the Emperor Humāyun. This tragedy occurred on Thursday, the 20th of Rabi-u-s sani, 1173 A.H. (30th November, 1759). On the same day a youth named Muhiu-l Millat, son of Muhiu-s Sunnat, son of Kām Bakhsh, was raised to the throne with the title of Shāh Jahān II. In the meantime, the report of Ahmad Shāh Durrāni's invasion spread among the people.'

*Shāh Ālam II*: When the news of his father's death reached him this Prince was at Patna. Hearing of the murder 'he was much afflicted in his mind; but ascribing the event to the wise dispensations of Providence, he sat upon the throne of sovereignty on the 5th of Jumada-l awwal. Nawāb Shujā'u-d daula, after a few days, came to the border of his territories, and having invited the Emperor from Āzimābad (Patna), obtained the honour of an interview, and was exalted to the hereditary office of *Wazīr*, and afterwards accompanied him to Allahābad. It is through the means of that great man that the name of Sāhib Kirān Gurgan



(Timūr) still remains ; otherwise, the Abdālī would not have allowed one of his descendants to survive,' writes Muhammad Aslam, in the *Farhatu-n Nāzirin*.

The history of Shāh Ālam II and his successors down to the deposition of the 'last of the Mughal Emperors' need not be pursued here. From what has been written it must be plain to the reader that the *Mughal Empire* had by now ceased to exist.

'When twenty years had elapsed of the reign of Shāh Ālam,' writes Kudratu-llah in his *Jām-i Jahān-numa*, 'in every corner of the Kingdom people aspired to exercise independence. Allahābad, Oudh, Etāwah, Shukohābad, and the whole country of the Afghans (Rohillas) are in the possession of the Nawāb Wazīr Asafu-d daula, and the whole country of Bengal has been subjected by the strong arm of the Firingis. The country of the Jāts is under Najaf Khān, and the Dakhin is partly under Nizām Ali Khān, partly under the Mahrattas, and partly under Haidar Naik and Muhammad Ali Khān Sirāju-d daula of Gopamau. The Sikhs hold the whole *suba* of the Punjab, and Lahore and Multan ; and Jainagar and other places are held by Zabita Khān. In this manner other *zamindārs* have established themselves here and there. All the world is waiting in anxious expectation of the appearance of Imām Mahdi, who is to come in the latter days. Shāh Ālam sits in the palace of Delhi, and has no thought beyond the gratification of his own pleasure, while his people are deeply sorrowful and grievously oppressed even unto death.'

#### THE KING-MAKERS :

The history of the nine years from Farrukh-siyar (1712) to Ibrāhīm Shāh (1720) is very largely the biography of the *Saiyid Brothers*, as the 'King-makers,' Abdullah Khān and Husain Āli Khān Barha, are familiarly known in history. They first acquired importance during Farrukh-siyar's contest for the throne. The father of the Saiyid brothers was successively the *subahdār* of Bijapur and Ajmer. Saiyid Miyan as he was called "had risen in the service of Ruhullah Khān, Alamgīr's *Mīr Bakshi*, and finally, on receiving an imperial *mansab*, attached himself to the eldest Prince Muhammad Muazzam Shāh Ālam." Hasan Āli Khān, the elder of the two brothers, was forty-six years, and Husain Āli Khān, the younger, forty-four years of age at the time of their emergence from comparative obscurity. In 1697-8 Hasan Āli was *faujdār* in Khāndesh and later at Aurangābad. Husain held a similar post in the *subahs* of Ajmer and Agra. During the battle of Jajau (1707) they held the rank of 3,000 and 2,000, and fought in the vanguard of Shāh Ālam's army.

As a reward for their services their status was raised to 4000, and the title of Abdullah Khān was conferred on the elder Saiyid. But they were dissatisfied. When Prince Jahāndar met them, the morning after Jajau, Husain Āli Khān is reported to have said that what they had done was nothing, many had done as much, but that '*their valour would be known when their lord was deserted and alone, and the strength of their right arm had seated him on the throne.*' This proud prophecy was fulfilled in favour of Farrukh-siyar, five years later, and to the destruction of the Prince to whom it was expressed, viz. Jahāndar Shāh.

By the favour of Prince Azimu-sh Shān, in 1711, Saiyid Abdullah Khān was made his deputy in the province of Allahābad. Three years earlier (1708), Husain Āli had been appointed to the government of Bihar by the same Prince. The claim of Farrukh-siyar (Azimu-sh Shān's son) on the gratitude and support of the Saiyids was great; and, as already noticed, they did not fail in his contest for the throne (1712). In fact, Farrukh-siyar's success was almost entirely due to them. The result was fateful.

Jahāndar Shāh was dethroned and ignominiously put to death, and Farrukh-siyar was installed in his place (1712), only to meet with the same fate seven years later (1719). This last was a terrible year for the *faineant* Emperors: Rafiu-d Darajat and Rafiu-d Daula were successively raised to the throne; but the hand of death removed them from their captivity,—for the dominance of the Saiyid brothers meant for them nothing less. A third Prince, Muhammad Neku-siyar made a bid for the throne under other auspices, but inevitably failed (1719); he was sent to Salimgarh (another "Tower of London") to die there in captivity in March, 1723. The Saiyid brothers again rose equal to the situation, and managed to secure yet another Prince for the throne. This was Muhammad Shāh, a lad of eighteen summers, good-looking, 'with many good qualities and of excellent intelligence. His mother also was well acquainted with State business, and was a woman of much intelligence and tact' . . . . . Nevertheless 'the *Wazir* and . . . all the officers and servants around the Emperor were as before, the servants of Saiyid Abdullah. When the young Emperor went out for a ride, he was surrounded with a halo, by numbers of the Saiyid's trusted adherents; and when occasionally, in the course of two or three months, he went out hunting, or for an excursion into the country, they went with him and brought him back.' Their

minion 'Ratan Chand held a firm position. His authority extended over all civil, revenue, and legal matters, even to the appointment of *Kāzis* in the cities and other judicial officers. All the other government officials were put in the background, and no one would undertake any business but under a document with his seal.'

But "laughter ends with weeping, and rejoicing with sorrow." The Saiyid brothers were caught in the diplomatic tangle,—a net, partly at least, of their own making,—whose texture was intrigue and culmination death. Husain Ali was murdered in 1720 at the instigation of the 'King's Friends'; Abdullah Khān sought to avenge his brother's death by raising yet another 'Emperor' to the throne. The story of this misadventure has already been told. Prince Sultan Ibrāhim's and Abdullah Khān's fate was settled on the battlefield of Hasanpur (or Husenpur), 13th-14th November, 1720, Abdullah Khān was captured, and Ibrāhim, who had fled from the field, was brought back a prisoner."

Saiyid Abdullah Khān Barha remained a prisoner in the citadel of Delhi, under the charge of Haidar Kuli Khān, for another two years. He was treated with respect, receiving delicate food to eat and fine clothes to wear. But so long as he survived the Mughals remained uneasy, not knowing what sudden change of fortune might happen. 'Thus they never ceased their efforts to alarm Muhammad Shāh ... Two years elapsed, but the Mughals never ceased in their plotting, until at length they obtained the Emperor's consent to the administration of poison.' Abdullah Khān died on 11 October 1722 being then about fifty-seven (lunar) years of age.

*The Saiyid Régime* : It must be clear, from what has been stated above, that the Saiyids were in the forefront of the stage for nearly a decade, from the rise of Farrukh-siyar to the fall of Abdullah Khān. During this period the Emperors were mere puppets, their life being spent more inside the *zanānā* than outside of it. No wonder that, under such circumstances, 'the withering of the trees of this world was caused by the hot winds of the negligence and carelessness of rulers; and dissension among well-disposed nobles'; and 'great disorders arose in the country.'

In the first place, Farrukh-siyar, though weak and vacillating in character, having once attained the throne, tried to kick off the ladder with which he had climbed it. But this attempt proved his ruin. Secondly, the unprecedented ascendancy of the Saiyid brothers

incited jealousy, opposition, and intrigue among fellow nobles, which proved equally fatal to the Saiyids and the Empire also.

At the accession of Farrukh-siyar, Saiyid Abdullah Khān was created Chief Minister. The younger brother, Husain Āli Khān, was made First Bakhshi. Among the personal favourites of the Emperor was Mīr Jumla who was officially no more than head of the pages and messengers, but *against whose opinion even the Chief Minister himself found it difficult to act*. Among the provincial *subahdārs* the most powerful was Chin Kilich Khān, son of the late Ghāziū-d dīn Khān now entitled *Nizām-ul Mulk*. He was nominally given supreme control of the six *subahs* of the Deccan, being also empowered to select lands to be held in *jagir* for furnishing the pay of himself and his followers, etc. But Haidar Kuli Khān, a protégé of Mīr Jumla, was at the same time sent as *dwān* of the whole Dakhin, with authority over every department, except those of the *Nāzim*, of the report-writers, and of the deciding of suits. Dāud Khān Panni, who had acquired fame as the deputy of Zu-l fikār Khān in the Deccan, was transferred to Ahmedābad.

The tragedy of Farrukh-siyar's life was the fruit of his own conduct. If he had been wise, he would have leaned upon the Saiyid brothers; then his reign might have been a success instead of the miserable failure it turned out to be. As it happened, he leaned on the wrong side. He drew his inspiration from poisonous quarters, and died of the venom he had chosen to inhale. Mīr Jumla, Jai Singh, Itikad Khān, Muhammad Amin Khān, Khān Daurān, and all the brood of poltroons and sycophants Farrukh-siyar relied upon, brought about his ruination. Hasty writers have thrown the blame for this upon the Saiyid brothers. But whatever the personal shortcomings of both Abdullah Khān and Husain Āli Khān and the character of their 'dictatorship' in the following reigns, it is certain that, so far as Farrukh-siyar was concerned, they have been more sinned against than sinning.

Farrukh-siyar owed his throne to the Saiyids, and naturally, they expected (especially from their knowledge of their protégé's dependent character) "to exercise all the real power of the state, leaving to the emperor only the pageantry, and such a command of wealth and honours as might enable him to gratify his favourites." But, as an examination of the chief appointments under Farrukh-siyar will show, they received very little besides "the two offices which were the price

of their services," "while the Emperor's friends and the Turāni chief obtained the lion's share." And, as Khāfi Khān remarks, 'The two brothers were not inclined to bear patiently Mir Jumla's invidious and provoking interference in their affairs.' The result was unremitting intrigue on the part of the Saiyid's enemies, with Farrukh-siyar at its heart and centre ineptly conniving, encouraging, and promoting to his own final unmaking and utter destruction. The Saiyids throughout acted with admirable restraint and tact. But human patience has its limits : and when the furies burst Nemesis proved relentless.

*Plots against the Saiyids :* A bare enumeration of the plots would suffice to reveal the situation : (1) Saiyid Husain Āli being the more intractable of the brothers, was sent against the Rajputs, with secret despatches to Rāja Ajit Singh, offering him tempting terms in the event of his getting rid of the Imperial general. (2) Husain Āli Khān, on the failure of the first plot, was despatched to the South as *subahdār* of the Deccan, while at the same time Dāud Khān Panni was secretly incited to confront him on the way and get rid of him if possible, on promise of giving him the viceroyalty of the Deccan in place of the Saiyid. (3) A more direct attempt was made on the life of the elder Saiyid Abdullah Khān under the very nose of the Emperor : at the Nauroz ceremonies the *wazir* was to have been surrounded and assassinated or imprisoned. But unfortunately for Farrukh-siyar, this plot also miscarried like the rest ; the *wazir* caught scent of the trap and overawed the Imperial muster on the occasion by a larger massing of troops in advance.

In the face of such persistent danger, the Saiyid brothers would have been fools if they did not also make efforts to weaken, outwit, or overawe their enemies. Thus, when the Imperial officers were fighting against the rebellious Jāts, their chieftain Churāman was given surreptitious support by Abdullah Khān ; Husain Āli Khān discovered the secret messages to Rāja Ajit Singh, offered him suitable favours, and finally secured his alliance ; the attempt of Dāud Khān resulted in Husain Āli's victory, the death of Dāud, and the discovery of further incriminating *firmāns* ; and the plot to assassinate Abdullah Khān led to the *wazir's* s. o. s. to his brother in the South, who marched post-haste to the capital with all the forces he could rally and brought about a revolution.\* The palace was surrounded by

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\* In his haste to rush to the north, Husain Āli Khān concluded a treaty with Rāja Shāhu, advantageous to the latter, which Farrukh-siyar refused

Saiyid troops, Farrukh-siyar was deposed, Rafiu-d Darajat was raised to the throne, and finally the ex-Emperor was dragged out of the *harem*, insulted and brutally strangled.

The end of the tragedy has already been described. Two more Princes (Rafiu-d Darajat and Rafiu-d Daula) tumbled from the throne into the grave in one single year (1719), and a fourth was crowned, viz., Muhammad Shāh. We must now turn to the fall of the King-makers under this more fortunate Prince.

*Fall of the Saiyids* : Saiyid Husain Āli Khān was murdered in the Deccan, and Abdullah Khān, rankling under this calamity, attempted to set up Sultan Ibrāhim as Emperor in place of Muhammad Shāh ; the failure of this *coup* proved his ruin also. Both these events took place in the year 1720, i. e. within less than two years of the palace revolution that put the Saiyids in actual power : Farrukh-siyar was dethroned in February 1719 ; Husain Āli Khān was murdered in October 1720 ; and Abdullah Khān was defeated and imprisoned in November 1720. The so-called *Dictatorship*, therefore, shrinks to an actual duration of twenty unsettled months ! During the rest of the period 1712-19 other counsels than those of these *Dictators* prevailed with the Emperors. The prestige acquired by the Saiyid brothers on account of their deposition of Jahāndar Shāh, the enthronement of Farrukh-siyar and his three successors in the course of a single year, and the military backing they had during the larger part of their tenure, have served to bloat their reputation for good or

(Foot-note contd. from p. 624.)

to ratify. In the hope of its ratification, however, he got a force of 10,000 Marathas, and an assurance to keep the peace in the Deccan during his absence. The terms of the treaty, as agreed to by Husain Āli, were to acknowledge Shāhu's claims to the whole of the territory formerly possessed by Shivāji, with the addition of later conquests ; to restore all the forts in the possession of the Mughals in that tract ; to allow the levy of *chauth* over the whole of the Deccan ; and to make a further payment of one-tenth, as *sardeshmukhi*. In return, Shāhu was to pay a tribute of ten *lacs* of rupees, to furnish 15,000 horse, to preserve the tranquillity of the country, and to be answerable for any loss occasioned by depredations from whatever quarter. 10,000 Marathas were also to accompany Husain Āli Khān to Delhi.—Elphinstone, p. 688.

"Although Farrukh-siyar refused to ratify this agreement," observes Irvine, "there can be little doubt that on the spot it was acted upon and in 1719, after the dethronement of Farrukh-siyar, the formal deeds were issued."—Irvine, II, 164 ; *ibid*, I, p. 407. See detailed terms of the treaty, Sinha, *Rise of the Peshwas*, p. 34.

evil. But in reality, Abdullah Khān, the *wazir*, spent most of his time in the pursuit of his own pleasures ; so much so, that he did not even attend personally to State business for months together, and had to be warned frequently against such delinquency.\* His agent Ratan Chand, no doubt, had a considerable hold upon the administration ; but even this was challenged, often not unsuccessfully, by the King's favourites : Mīr Jumla and others practically neutralised his power. Husain Āli Khān, the *amir-u-l umra*, with his fiery and irascible temper, only flashed like lightning behind the clouds of intrigue. The two brothers, kept up a dignity that indicated strength and self-confidence, and maintained a nonchalance towards all others that did not affect their profit and status. The swiftness of their fall showed the essential weakness of their position, which was being undermined at the very moment they were feeling themselves most unassailable.

The circumstances of the collapse of the Saiyid régime are bound up with the rise of a new star, viz. Nizāmu-l Mulk, and will be described in the next section. Here it is appropriate to close with the meed of praise the critical and not very sympathetic Khāfi Khān thought it his duty all the same to bestow on the two Saiyids :

'In the course of this narrative', he writes candidly, 'upon some points the pen has been used to condemn the two brothers, the martyrs of misfortune, and this cannot now be rectified ; but in atonement I will now write a few words upon the excellence and beauty of character, the love of justice, and the liberality of both brothers . . . Both the brothers were distinguished in their day for their generosity and leniency towards all mankind. The inhabitants of those countries which were innocent of contumacy and selfishness made no complaints of the rule of the Saiyids. In liberality and kindness to learned men and to the needy, and in protection of men of merit, Husain Āli Khān excelled his elder brother, and was the Hatim suited to his day. Numbers owed their comfort to the cooked food and raw grain which he gave away. At the time of the scarcity at Aurangābad, he appropriated a large sum of money and a great quantity of grain to supply the wants of the poor and of widows. The reservoir at Aurangābad was begun by him, . . . which, in summer when water is scarce relieves the sufferings of the inhabitants. In their native country of Barha they

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\* Khāfi Khān relates, 'Saiyid Abdullah Khān was very fond of women, and the common talk was that two or three of the late King's. (Farrukh-siyar's) beauties pleased him, and he took them to himself, although for the gratification of his . . . desires, he had seventy or eighty beautiful women.'—*Ibid.*, p. 481. See also Irvine, I. pp. 416-17.

built *sarais*, bridges and other buildings for the public benefit. Saiyid Abdullah was remarkable for his patience, endurance, and wide sympathy.'

A few significant facts revealing the character and policy of the Saiyids might also be adduced :—(1) Under their influence the *Jizya* was abolished at the accession of Farrukh-siyar. An attempt was made by their rivals at Court a few years later to reimpose it, which they did for a time, but so long as the Saiyids were in power this could not be permanent. (2) Rājā Ajit Singh was transformed from a rebel into a strong ally, and induced to give his daughter in marriage to Farrukh-siyar. His alienation later was the fruit of Farrukh-siyar's own folly. (3) Likewise, the Marathas, under the influence of Husain Ali Khān, were won over by the grant of their utmost demands of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi*. If Farrukh-siyar had been tactful and wise they could have been secured as allies of the Empire. But they became the instruments of his destruction in the hands of the Saiyids because of Farrukh-siyar's own ineptitude.

*Parties at Court* : The overthrow of the Saiyids was due to the intrigues of a party at Court and outside that worked incessantly against them. This opposition was mainly comprised of foreigners—nobles and adventurers from Irān and Turān—who looked upon the Saiyids as too Indianised, pro-Hindu, and inclined to heresy. Owen states, "The Seiads of Barha, though of alleged exotic origin, were old inhabitants of India, and prided themselves on being Hindostanees. As such their sympathies would naturally be with the natives, rather than with the Mogul conquering class of foreigners. And although they were Mussulmans, they were also *Shias*, another cause of estrangement between them and the Moguls, who were mostly *Soonees*, and a strong ground for aversion to Aurangzib's reactionary and persecuting policy, and for rallying what I may call nationalist sentiment to their side under the banner of toleration and political equality, as established by Akbar." Irvine refers to a greater multiplicity of Parties at Court : (1) The Mughal, Turāni and Irāni "formed the backbone of the army of occupation. Their numbers were increased still further during the twenty-five years or more, from 1680 to 1707, during which Alamgīr waged incessant war in the Dakhin, with the local Muhammadan States and then with the Mahrattas." (2) The Afghans or Pathāns 'had a talent for forming permanent settlements in India, which neither the Mughal nor the Persian has displayed ; . . . (and) the Afghans were much prized as valiant soldiers. (But) their weak-



ness was too great a love of money, and too great a readiness to desert one employer for another, if he made a higher bid. They were too rough and illiterate to obtain much distinction in civil life." During Shāh Jahān's reign they were definitely discouraged ; but under Aurangzeb they again found favour, "those nobles who had Afghan soldiers receiving the most consideration." (3) Then there were other foreigners, serving in small numbers, like the Arabs, Habshis, Rumis, and Firangis (Europeans). "Eunuchs were generally of Habshi race, and the chief police officer of Delhi was frequently a Habshi." (4) "In opposition to the Mughal or foreign, was the home-born or Hindustāni party. It was made up of Muhammadans born in India, many of them descended in the second or third generation from foreign immigrants. Men like the Sayyids of Barha, for instance, whose ancestors had settled in India many generations before, came, of course, under the description of Hindustāni or *Hindustān-za* (Indian-born). To this class also belonged all the Rajput and Jāt chiefs, and other powerful Hindu land-owners. Naturally, too, the very numerous and industrious body of Hindus, who filled all the subordinate offices of a civil nature, attached themselves to the same side. Punjab Khatri were very numerous in this official class ; most of the rest were Agarwāl Baniyas or Kāyasthas. It also comprised many Muhammadans from Kashmir, who seem to have rivalled the Hindus as secretaries and men of business."

But whatever the other distinctions among the parties, the most important was the cross-division into "Emperor's friends and Wazir's friends." We have already witnessed the interplay of these two factions during their incubating period under Farrukh-siyar. The palace revolutions of King-making were the achievements of the latter with all their imposing array of forces ; whereas, the former, to all appearances less impressive to start with, were the authors of the more effective and real revolution that was implied in the fall of the Saiyids. This triumph of the King's "friends" over the "King-makers" is one of the most fascinating stories recorded in history. The authors of it were Mīr Jumla, Itikad Khān, Khān Daurān Muhammad Amin Khān (Itimadu-d daula), the mother of Muhammad Shāh, and Muhammad Shāh the Emperor himself. But *qui bono* ? By all their combined activities one man, whose name is not mentioned among theirs, benefited most. That man rides like a colossus over the chaotic history of the Later Mughals that still re-

mains to be told. He was none other than CHIN KILCH KHÂN, ASAF JAH, NIZĀMU-L MULK, son of the blind Mughal noble Ghāziu-d dīn Khān Fīrūz Jang, who was first governor of the Deccan and then of Gujarat.

#### RISE OF NIZĀMU-L MULK :

"Perhaps the most important person in the group of men that rose into the very front rank upon Farrukh-siyar's accession," writes Irvine, "was Nizāmu-l Mulk." He was nearly forty-three (lunar) years of age at that time (1712). He had already distinguished himself, both as a soldier and as a provincial governor, under Alamgīr. But from his appointment to the six *subahs* of the Deccan, in 1713, to his death, thirty-five years later, in 1748, he occupied a position of pre-eminence which he never lost.

His ancestors had come from Samarkand. His grandfather, Khwāja Abid, took service under Aurangzeb when he was about to start for the conquest of the Peacock throne. Nearly thirty years later he found himself governor of Zafarābad Bidar, and died, on 30th January 1687, of a wound received during the siege of Golkonda. Six years earlier he had received the title of *Kilch Khān*. His eldest son, Mir Shahābu-d dīn, likewise, rose to great eminence in the reign of Aurangzeb. He first made his mark by his loyalty and heroism during the trying days of Prince Akbar's rebellion in Rajputāna. He was also with Aurangzeb during the quarter century of his arduous and desperate warfare in the Deccan. He was conspicuous in the capture of Haidarābad and Deogarh, and was sent against Sambhāji in 1687-88. He pursued the Marathas into Mālwa in 1703-4. But after the death of Aurangzeb (1707) he took no part in the war of succession; the Turānis generally were not in favour with Bahādur Shāh. Hence, Ghāziu-d dīn Fīrūz Jang, as he was then called, was transferred by that Emperor to Gujarat, as leaving him in the Deccan was considered too dangerous. He died at Ahmedābad on 8th December 1710. During the last twenty years of his life, Ghāziu-d dīn was totally blind, yet continued in active service—a unique instance! His rank was 7,000 *zāt* and he left behind him a legacy of "1½ lakhs of Rupees in bills on bankers, 133,000 gold *muhars*, 25,000 *hun* (gold) and *nim-paoli* (gold), 17,000 gold *paoli*, 400 *adheli* (half) and 8,000 whole silver *paoli*, 140 horses, 300 camels, 400 oxen and 38 elephants."

Mir Kamru-d dīn Ghāziu-d dīn's son, was born on 11th August 1671. He entered service in his thirteenth year, and received the title of Chin Kilch Khān in 1690-1. At the time of Aurangzeb's death, he was governor of Bijapur. Bahādur Shāh appointed him *subadār* of Oudh and *faujdār* of Gorakpur (December 1707). His title

now was *Khān Daurān Bahādur*, and his rank 6000 *zāt*, 6000 horse. On his father's death he also received his titles and rank of 7000 *zāt* and horse. After a period of comparative obscurity, on account of his own cold or hostile attitude towards Bahādur Shāh and his successor Jahāndar Shāh, he again rose to prominence under Farrukh-siyar (1712). First he was made Khān-khānan and then received the title of *Nizāmu-l Mulk Bahādur Fath Jung*. As a reward for his services at the time of Jahāndar's overthrow, he was entrusted with the government of the Deccan. But, suspecting his ambitions, only two years later, he was superseded in his southern charge by Husain Āli Khān himself. Nizāmu-l Mulk was then posted to Murādābad, whence he was recalled to Court by Farrukh-siyar during the days of the crisis. Being disappointed in his expectations from that Emperor, and owing to the suddenness of the *coup de main* of Husain Āli Khān, he thought it expedient to cast in his lot with the Saiyids for the time being. At first they thought of sending him to Bihar, in order to keep him at a distance from the capital, but later they decided, as the better arrangement, to keep him in Mālwa, where he would be, as it were, between two fires : the relations of the Saiyids being governors on either side, in the Deccan and at Akbarābad. "Remembering how short his tenure of the Dakhin had been, Nizām-ul Mulk made his acceptance of Mālwa conditional on a solemn agreement that he should not be removed again. The promise was given and the Nawab started for Ujjain on 24 Rabi II, 1131 H. (15 March 1719), a few days after the accession of Rafi-ud-darajat, taking the precaution to remove the whole of his family and possessions, thus leaving no hostages behind him in the Saiyids' hands."

Khāfi Khān adds, 'and there accompanied him more than a thousand companions *mansabdārs* and *jagirdārs*, who were poor and sick at heart with the unkindness shown by the Saiyids and through pay being in arrears. (Once in Mālwa), Nizāmu-l Mulk busied himself in collecting soldiers and artillery, which are necessary for governing the world and keeping it in order. He gave 500 horses to Muhammad Ghiyās Khān for his Mughal fraternity, and turned them into horsemen. He lent large sums of money to . . . . others, binding them to himself by the bonds of debt and kindness.'

These bellicose activities of the Nizām aroused the suspicions of the watchful Saiyids, and Husain Āli Khān called for an explanation. The wily Nawāb replied that kingdoms could not be governed with rose-water. He pointed out that people who had never been in Mālwa could not be expected to know its condition ; but Husain Āli

Khān having passed through that province lately must know the facts well. "The Mahrattas, with over fifty thousand horsemen, were harrying it; if troops in large numbers were not entertained, what hope was there of defending the country from their ravages?" For this reason he had added to his resources in men and *material*.

This explanation, however, failed to satisfy Husain Āli Khān, and a *firmān* was issued to him, against all previous assurances, recalling him from Mālwa. It was stated therein that, for the protection of the Deccan, Husain Āli Khān should himself take charge of that province, and that Nizāmu-l Mulk could make his own choice out of Akbarābad, Allahābad, Multan, or Burhānpur. "This was a distinct breach of faith and no doubt confirmed Nizāmu-l Mulk in the belief that he was to be destroyed." Confirmation of this danger also came to him from other quarters :

'After the accession of Muhammad Shāh,' according to Khāfi Khān, 'letters were sent by him and by his mother, Maryām Makāni, through the medium of Itimadu-d daula Muhammad Amin Khān, to Nizāmu-l Mulk, informing him that the constraint used by the Saiyids was so strict that he had only liberty to go to service on the Sabbath, and that he had no power of giving any orders; that the Saiyids, in their futile scheming, proposed, after settling the affairs of Neku-siyar and Giridhar, to get rid of Nizāmu-l Mulk and then to do as they pleased; and that they (Muhammad Shāh and his mother) had full reliance on Nizāmu-l Mulk, that he would not fail in the loyalty which his ancestors had ever exhibited.'

Khāfi Khān continues, 'Nizāmu-l Mulk had employed the interval of eight or nine months in collecting seven or eight thousand horse and materials of war. *He was cautious and watchful, and he had formed the design of conquering the Dakkhin, of setting free that land of treasure and of soldiers.* He now received notice from his *vakils* that the Saiyids had sent officers to summon him to the presence. But before these he had received letters from the Emperor and from private friends, telling him there was no time to be lost, and that *what he had to do he must do quickly.*'

Meanwhile, under the ostensible ground of fetching his family from Aurangābad, but really to chastise Nizāmu-l Mulk, Husain Āli Khān despatched Saiyid Dilāwar Āli Khān with a large force to the south. At the same time, he ordered his nephew Saiyid Ālam Āli Khān, who was at Aurangābad to get ready for an offensive in that direction.

'Nizāmu-l Mulk perceived that the brothers had the fixed inten-

tion of overthrowing the royal house and of removing the *Khalifa* of the world. Seeing that there were no other means of safety, he consulted with his friends, and setting out from Ujjain, he made three marches towards Agra, and then turned to the Dakhin.' "What man is there holding my high station," he said, "who would not defend his honour? Victory lies hidden from us, it is the gift of the Most High, and is not gained by the greatness of a host. *I swear by the God that made me, that even if they bring all Hindustan against me I will still resist undaunted.* If longer life has been decreed me, no harm will arrive; if the hour of departure is at hand, nothing can avail me." With this determination this man of destiny carried everything before him.

By 23 May 1720, Asirgarh and Burhānpur fell into his hands. 'Just before he got possession of Burhānpur, the children and dependants of Saifu-d din Āli Khān, brother of Husain Āli Khān, had come to that place on their way to Delhi. They were greatly alarmed when Nizāmu-l Mulk became master of the city. Some of his friends counselled him to seize upon their valuables (but he nobly refused) . . . and (to their great relief and surprise) sent an escort to guard them as far as the Nerbadda.' But his most decisive victories were against the two formidable forces that had been directed against him by Husain Āli Khān.

The details of these encounters, interesting as they are, may not detain us. For considerations of space we must state only the bare result : Nizāmu-l Mulk overthrew Dilāwar Āli Khān at Pandhar "between Burhānpur and the Narmada." Despite the characteristic heroism of the Rajputs in the army the Saiyid forces met with disaster. Nizāmu-l Mulk was not even wounded. His officers asked for orders to pursue, but he refused.

"He collected the wounded near his tent and sent them surgeons, healing salves and clothes. For some he provided horses, for some palankins, and some litters. On their recovery he asked them to enlist with him. As their master Husain Āli Khān was still alive, they refused; their road expenses were then paid and they departed. The body of Dilāwar Āli Khān (who died in action) was decently buried; those of the Hindus were burnt under the supervision of Rāja Indar Singh. Nizāmu-l Mulk and his troops returned to Barhānpur."

When the news of this disaster in Khāndesh reached the Saiyid brothers on 5 July 1720 they were both shocked and perplexed. But resourceful diplomacy suggested a shameless course :

'A *fīrmān* was issued to Nizāmu-l Mulk, accompanied by a letter from Husain Āli Khān. Therein it was stated that Dilāwar Āli Khān had been

directed to go to Aurangābad to escort the writer's family to Hindustan. But, pretending orders for which there was no foundation, the said Dilāwar Āli Khān had interfered with Nizāmu-l Mulk, and, the Lord be praised ! had only received what he deserved. Several persons led by love of mischief-making and devilish devices (*shaitanat*), had written untruly of several matters in a manner likely to sow discord between them. *Alas ! that such suspicions should arise between old friends !* Envious persons, by sowing dissension, hope to open a way for themselves.' But the writer, knowing your loyalty, intervened. "By this means, I am thankful to say, your enemies were cast down and your friends made happy. His Majesty has graciously resolved to issue to you a patent for the government of the Dakhin. Accept my congratulations. Ālam Āli Khān, my (adopted) son, and my family propose to return to this country ; kindly furnish them with an escort and see that they are not molested on the way."

As a matter of fact, as we have already stated, Ālam Āli Khān had been instructed if possible to get rid of the "Old wolf." Nizāmu-l Mulk played a similar ruse with Ālam Āli.

He pretended that he was disbanding his army and proceeding on pilgrimage to Mecca. But, on 20 July 1720, he pitched his camp in a precipitous position full of thorny scrub close to Seogaom, in *subah* Berar. Owing to heavy rains and Maratha plundering, prices rose so high that only two to four pounds of flour sold for a rupee. 'The smell even of grass or grain did not reach the four-footed animals.' On 9th August Nizāmu-l Mulk moved his army to a place two or three *kos* from Bālāpur. The battle began the next day. Ālam Āli Khān was wounded, surrounded and beheaded. At a critical moment, when his elephant turned tail, this brave stripling of a Saiyid (he was only 22) 'dripping with blood from his wounds, turned his face towards the army of Nizāmu-l Mulk, and cried out that the elephant had turned his back, but he had not. All his own arrows were exhausted, but such of the enemy's arrows as struck his face, or his body, or his *howda* he quickly pulled out and returned. He received so many wounds in succession that he sank under them ; and sacrificed his life for his uncles.'

*Husain Āli marches to his Doom* : Only one course now remained open. Leaving Abdullah Khān in charge of the capital and the north, Husain Āli Khān marched south taking the Emperor with him. But there was one thorn in his side. Muhammad Amīn Khān, Itimadu-d daula, was a problem difficult to manage. He was a cousin of Nizāmu-l Mulk, and virtual leader of the Mughals at Court and in the army. He was too dangerous to be left behind, and equally precarious in the camp. To allay suspicions Muhammad Amīn Khān talked loudly in *darbār* of the baseness of Nizāmu-l Mulk's conduct and his wickedness generally ; yet, in reality, not a moment passed

but he was busy intriguing against his political adversaries, the Saiyids. Husain Ali, in order to humour him, always addressed him as "Respected Uncle." But despite all this cunning on either side, a plot was being hatched, all the way from Agra, for the destruction of Husain Ali Khān.

The chief conspirators were Muhammad Amin Khān, Haidar Kuli Khān (chief of the artillery), Abdu-l Ghaffur and Mir Jumla. Saiyid M. Amin, Saadat Khān, new *faujdār* of Bayānā, was also admitted into the secret. A willing tool was found in Mir Haidar Beg Dughlat who, though a Saiyid, was brought over to do the deed. Muhammad Shāh the Emperor and his mother patronised this gang with the hope of securing their liberation from the galling yoke of the King-makers. Husain Ali Khān had been warned of his danger by discerning friends. But with the nonchalance of a Julius Cæsar he replied, "Who. is there who could raise a hand against me, what plot is there, what reason for my assassination?"

On the appointed day Muhammad Amin Khān affected illness. At about mid-day Husain Ali Khān was returning, in his palankin, from the Imperial presence. On the way his prospective assassin accosted him with "A complaint! a complaint!" and drew from his sleeve a scroll supposed to be a petition. When the Bakhshi, who seemed to know him, called him near, the complainant loudly cried imprecations upon Muhammad Amin Khān for alleged ill-treatment. As Saiyid Husain Ali leaned on one side towards his *hooka*, at the same time reading the petition, Haidar Beg, the pretentious plaintiff, stabbed him with what looked like a butcher's knife. Though the assassin was cut down on the spot, the great Saiyid too succumbed. "In the Indian Karbala a second Husain was martyred by a second Yazid." (8 October 1720.)

On the day following this crime, a formal *darbār* was held by Muhammad Shāh. "In the interval Muhammad Amin Khān had posted pickets of Mughals to arrest deserters, and instructions were given to the armed villagers to stop any one who tried to leave the camp. In this way many men, though partisans of the Sayyids and anxious to escape, were forced to remain. Muhammad Amin Khān went among them in person to try and secure their adhesion." Several nobles laid their offerings at the Emperor's feet, and Muhammad Amin Khān himself was promoted to the rank of 8000 *zāt* and loaded with gifts. Khān-daurān, although he had sat on the fence to save himself from the odium of either party, was also given the same rank. Kamru-d dīn Khān (M. Amin's son), Haidar Kuli Khān, and Saadat Khān respectively received ranks of 7000, 6000, and 5000.

Saiyid Abdullah Khān's reactions to these happenings have already been described. He tried the old game of trying to set up a new Prince on the throne. This resulted in a tragedy both to himself and his protégé: both made their exit from life through the prison.

Abdullah Khān died in 1722, and Sultan Ibrāhīm in 1746, two years before Muhammad Shāh's death. Here we must resume the story of Nizāmu-l Mulk. The death of the Saiyid brothers rid him of his greatest rivals, though the guilt of their blood was on hands other than his. He was no party to any of the intrigues that proved them fatal ; though he might have been an interested but passive witness. " With the disappearance of the Sayyids," writes Irvine, " the story attains a sort of dramatic completeness."

The author of the *Siyar-ul-Mutākherin*, with pardonable exaggeration, notes—' There was some inequality in the merits of these two celebrated persons. It was universally acknowledged that Hussein Ali Khān, the younger, was superior to his elder brother in many qualifications, which bountiful heaven had bestowed on him. In actual power he excelled all the princes of his time, nay, he surpassed several that bore a character in history for having bestowed kingdoms and crowns, and conquered empires ; but neither his power nor his life was destined to endure long. If they had, it is probable that the times which we have now the mortification to behold, would not be so humiliating as they have proved, nor had the honour of Hindustan been thrown to the winds nor the Indian nobility and gentry been reduced to that deplorable condition, to which we now see them brought.'

The Saiyids had fallen in their rivalry with the Mughal or Court party, of which the principal leaders were Muhammad Amīn Khān, Haidar Kuli Khān, Saadat Ali Khān, and Nizāmu-l Mulk. The overthrow of the former, therefore, meant the triumph of the latter. Some of the promotions of these noblemen, following the murder of Husain Ali Khān have already been noted. The final redistribution of offices came after the victory against Abdullah Khān.

On 25 November 1720 a grand *darbār* was held in the *Diwān-i-khās*. The recipients of rewards worthy of mention were naturally the participators in the plot against the Saiyids. The brother of Husain Ali's murderer was elevated to the high rank of 4,000 ; Saadat Ali Khān, *faujdar* of Bayānā, was entrusted with the Government of Agra ; and Muhammad Khān Bangash, who deserted Saiyid Abdullah, was given charge of the Government of Allahābad. Muhammad Amīn Khān, the soul of the conspiracy, was made *wazīr* or Prime-Minister. But unfortunately he did not long survive this official revolution. He died on the 27th January 1721, after a short illness of four or five days. The jealousy between Khān-daurān and Kamru-d dīn Khān, the late *wazīr's* son, resulted in the invitation to the vacant office being sent to a third and distant candidate, namely, Nizāmu-l Mulk.



*Nizām becomes Wazir* : Nizāmu-l Mulk, on the appointment of Md. Amīn Khān, to the office of *wazir*, had wisely kept aloof from the capital. He had preferred to enjoy virtual independence to the doubtful advantages of the Premier's office. He had accordingly proceeded to the south and engaged himself in the conquest of the Carnatik and Mysore, and was making good his position against the Marathas. But when the call came from the capital, he felt it his duty to respond. On 20 February 1722 the *wazir*-ship was conferred upon him with the usual gifts of robes, jewels, a ring, a jewelled pen-case, etc.

This proved a bed of Procrustes rather than of roses. The Emperor was a mere plaything in the hands of his low favourites, like Koki (a clever woman of no status) and Hāfiz Khidmatgar Khān (a eunuch of the palace). Between these and envious nobles, like Samsamu-d daula Khān-daurān, Nizāmu-l Mulk found himself thwarted at every step. Aurangzeb was his model in all things, and he was ambitious to restore the administration to the condition it was in under him. He tried to abolish the system of *peshkash* which had dwindled into a form of dignified bribery, and to remedy the excessive assignment of revenue-paying lands to Princes, Princesses, and nobles, which entailed a great loss to the treasury. "He also commented on the unfitness of the men appointed to high rank, while old and deserving officers were in want of the necessities of life." But all his well-meant efforts proved not merely fruitless, but resulted in his estrangement from the Emperor and the nobles.

'Nizām-ul-Mulk,' writes Ghulām Husain, 'who was a man of much gravity, of a reserved behaviour, and fond of power, undertook to bring about a reform in some of the most important branches of public affairs

.He recommended the Emperor himself to assume in public an air of more gravity and seriousness ; to put aside all levity ; to suit his behaviour to his situation ; to restrain his servants within proper bounds ; to divide his time into stated hours of business in every department, and to appoint a time for rendering justice in person (the most important duty of all princes, and without which they cannot expect to satisfy heaven) ; in one word, to discharge worthily the duties incumbent on a great sovereign. To all these admonitions the emperor listened with patience, but they were not relished. That prince was yet in the prime of youth, and in the pride of dominion, and his disposition wholly bent on a life of pleasure. Nor were these representations more acceptable to most of the grandees, especially to Khān Dowrān, who could not bear to see such a man as Nizām-ul Mulk taking the lead at Court. The vezir, therefore, was looked upon with an evil eye, and subjected to peevish expressions.' Being over fifty years of

age, his manners were ridiculed as old-fashioned by the youthful Emperor and his boon-companions. "If it has any truth at all, to this time belongs the story that Muhammad Shāh laughed in open darbār at Nizām-ul Mulk's gait and attire and Samsam-ud-daula used the expression—See how the Dakhini monkey dances!"

The troubles with which the new *wazīr* was beset were not confined to the Court and capital. Among the provincial *subahdārs* also there were not a few who were jealous of him and plotted to bring about his fall. Prominent among these may be mentioned Haidar Kuli Khān, who was now Governor of Gujarat. As the reader might remember, he was *mir atash* or head of the artillery department, at the time of Husain Āli's assassination. His complicity in the murder had brought him to his present appointment. Nizām-ul Mulk's elevation was far from pleasing to this nobleman, and, to the extent it was possible for him, he set to work to counteract the measures of the new *wazīr*. He also showed signs of asserting his independence and assuming royal insignia. Failing to bring him round by other means, Nizām-ul Mulk secured from the Emperor an order to take charge of Ahmedābad, himself. With this object he set out from Delhi on 11 November 1722.

Haidar Kuli in his desperation tried several stratagems against this strong measure. He sent his son Kāsim Khān, to the capital to work upon the mind of the Emperor, to bribe the nobles into his favour, and, in short, to do whatever was necessary to secure his safety and restoration. But none of these attempts succeeded. The Nizām reached Ahmedābad on 16 February, 1723. Completely at a loss to know what to do to meet the situation, the recalcitrant Governor feigned madness and fled. Nizām-ul Mulk thus secured his new charge without having to strike a blow. So, on the 28th of the month, he left Ahmedābad, leaving the province in the charge of his uncle, Hamid Khān, to act as his deputy.

On his way back to the capital, the *wazīr* also secured the submission of Dost Muhammad Khān of Bhopāl, who, in 1720, had joined the service of Dilāwar Khān when that general was marching south to arrest Nizām-ul Mulk. After this, on 25th May 1723, at Sironj, the *wazīr* appointed his second cousin Azimu-llah Khān as deputy-governor of Mālwa. On the 3rd July Nizām-ul Mulk was back at the capital, and was received in audience by the Emperor.

But as things stood at the Court, the Nizām could not continue long in his high office. His zeal for reform of the administration was

not abated in the least by his earlier failures. But the favourites of the Emperor still continued their malign influences.

One writer in extreme anguish of heart asks, 'What good is there in the Emperor sitting like a woman secluded within four walls? If sovereigns take to women's habits and entangle themselves in their tresses, what can a good Muhammadan do, but migrate to the Holy places, or if for that journey funds be wanting, take a dose of poison and leave this for another world?' Nizāmu-l Mulk's efforts were chiefly directed towards the stopping of corruption occasioned by the farming out of revenues, and towards the re-imposition of the *jizya*. This hateful tax had been abolished at the commencement of the reign owing to the intercession of Rāja Jai Singh and other loyal Hindus. The present effort of the Nizām to revive it proved abortive, as also his other reforms.\* A merely nominal reinstitution of the *jizya* was for the last time made in 1725 (March-April), and thereafter it disappeared for ever. But these attempts only served to rally the Hindus on behalf of the Opposition. The Emperor was a mere tool in the hands of his corrupt favourites. As a contemporary writer puts it, 'Every one was a chief minister or an administrator of the revenues.' Back-biters went and told Nizāmu-l Mulk that Muhammad Shāh was a worthless rake, unworthy of the throne, and worthy only to be deposed, to make room for Prince Ibrāhim or some other worthier Prince. At the same time they went to the Emperor and poisoned his ears against the *wazir*, who, they said, was ambitious like the Saiyid brothers, and hence dangerous to his person and crown. This naturally bred suspicion on either side and ultimately led to bitterness and estrangement between the Emperor and the *wazir*.

Under these circumstances, Nizāmu-l Mulk wisely thought the best course for him was to withdraw into the Deccan. But as such a step was likely to raise suspicions as to his motive, he complained of ill-health and desired a change. Delhi was too unbearable for him. On the 17th December he took formal leave of the Emperor and set out, ostensibly for his *jagirs* of Sāmbhal and Morādābad. He took his entire family with him, which gave rise to suspicions. On 18 February he wrote to Delhi expressing his intention of returning to the capital, but marched south, declaring that Mālwa and Gujarat, which were his charges, were endangered by Maratha incursions.

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\* 'One day Nizāmu-l Mulk, with the best intentions told the Emperor that the system of farming the *Khalisa* lands was very injurious to the country, and ought to be set aside; secondly, that the bribes which were received, under the name of *pekshkash*, were disgraceful to the Emperor and adverse to good policy; thirdly, that the *jizya* upon infidels ought to be collected as in the days of Aurangzeb.'

When he was sufficiently advanced, he set aside all pretexts and hastened into the Deccan. By August 1724 Nizāmu-l Mulk was safe at Aurangābad.

Meanwhile, the Court and enemies of Nizāmu-l Mulk had been very active hatching a plot to officially supersede him and also, if possible, to get rid of him altogether. The old tactics that had been used against Saiyid Husain Āli Khān were once again set in motion. Before the Nizām reached Aurangābad, orders from the Imperial capital had been despatched to Mubārīz Khān, father of the governor of Haidarābad, appointing him to the *subahdāri* of the Deccan and expecting him to march against Nizāmu-l Mulk. Unfortunately, however, for Mubārīz Khān, the *wazīr* caught scent of the whole plan and hurried to his southern capital. When the Emperor heard of this, fearing that it was too late to carry out his designs, and anxious to avert the *wazīr's* enmity, he issued counter-orders confirming the Nizām in the Deccan, and asking Mubārīz to take charge of Āzīmābad Patna instead. But Providence intervened : before the revised orders reached Mubārīz, he had already encountered Nizāmu-l Mulk and fallen in battle. This happened at Shakar Khera on 11th Oct., 1724. Nizāmu-l Mulk with admirable magnanimity administered relief to the wounded on both sides, by the distribution of food and medicine, and restored much of the booty (consisting of rich clothes and jewels belonging to the sons of the deceased) to its rightful owners.

From this time may be dated the virtual independence of the Nizām and the foundation of the present Haidarābad State. The Emperor was now reconciled to the Nizām, and renewed his favours towards him. On 20 June 1725 was issued a rescript to him confirming him in the *subahdāri* of the Deccan, though Ahmedābad and Mālwa were taken away from him. There were protestations of good faith on either side ; but not until twelve years later (October 1737) was the Nizām called back to the Imperial capital. What transpired in the interval may be only briefly indicated here.

"Henceforward he (Nizāmu-l Mulk) bestowed offices in the Dakhin ; he made promotions in rank, conferred titles and issued assignments on the land-revenue at his own will and pleasure. The only attributes of sovereignty from which he refrained were the use of the scarlet or imperial umbrella, the recitation of the Friday prayer in his own name, and the issue of coin stamped with his own superscription. Many astrologers had prophesied that if he chose he could sit on a throne. But he repudiated the suggestion saying, 'May throne and umbrella bring good fortune to him who holds them ! My business is to preserve my honour, and if this be mine, what need have I of an imperial throne ?'"

*Chaos in Hindustan* : The effect of the absence of a strong man like Nizāmu-l Mulk at the helm of affairs was only chaos. At the capital and in the provinces, 'Public business was dealt with as if it were a child's toy ; revenue business was disposed of by the heads of the army, and night-watchmen decided cases instead of the Kāzi. The Emperor was immersed in pleasure, the nobles drunk with envy, and the servants of the State were starving.' Under these conditions, Nizāmu-l Mulk was indifferent ; what should he care for the Emperor who was so weak and ungrateful ? The Marathas were getting too troublesome in the Deccan. So he encouraged them to spread their activities north of the Narmada, that they might leave him unmolested nearer home.

*Mālwa* : Girdhar Bahādur, the then governor of Mālwa, carried on a gallant fight against the Marathas led by Bāji Rao's commanders, Udāji Pawār, Malhār Rao Holkar, and Rānuji Sindhia. "The fortune of war constantly varied ; but whoever might win in the field, destruction to the prosperity of the country was equally the inevitable result." But Girdhar Bahādur fell fighting near Ujjain, on 8 December 1728, and the Marathas under Chimāji Appā, brother of Bāji Rao, got a permanent footing in Mālwa. The Rajputs, especially under Sawāi Jai Singh, welcomed the Marathas as a set-off against the Empire. The local *zamindars* too connived at their invasion, though it meant the substitution of King Stork for King Log, in order to cheat the Emperor of his revenues.

We have not the space to dwell on the activities of the Marathas in full. To cut a long story short, there were conflicts followed by compromises, and conflicts again ; for example, on 16 July 1736, Rāja Jai Singh appointed Bāji Rao Deputy Governor of Mālwa, on the latter's promise not to pillage the Imperial territories. But this was only to save appearances ; the Maratha raids continued as usual. In March 1737 they were defeated by Saadat Khān's army coming from Oudh. Saadat Khān boasted to the Emperor that he had routed the Marathas and driven them from Hindustan for good. To prove that this was not the truth, Bāji Rao led an expedition to the very gates of Delhi. As he wrote to his brother Chimāji Appā : "I was resolved to let the Emperor know the truth, to prove that I was in Hindustan, and to show him the Marathas at the gate of his capital. So I started on 26th Zi-l Qada, leaving the king's highway and making long marches . . . . Covering forty miles a day, in two marches I arrived at Delhi." (April 1737.)

*Gujarat* : That affairs elsewhere in the Empire were in no

better condition is indicated by the following account of Gujarat by Khāfi Khān :—

'The Emperor Muhammad Shāh, on being informed of these events (the depredations of the Mahrattas), sent Sarbuland Khān to be Governor of Ahmedābad. Nizāmu-l Mulk recalled Hamid Khān. But although Sarbuland Khān had an army of 7 or 8 thousand horse, most of whom were veterans, and a strong force of artillery, the Mahratta forces so swarmed in the province that he was unable to settle its affairs or to punish the enemy. They ravaged the country round Ahmedābad up to its very gates. The country could not repel the ravagers, and in its desolation it was unable to pay the sum required of it for the support of the soldiers, whose numbers were excessive. The officers with parties of men demanded their pay, and used violence and insolence in extorting it. At length it was arranged that for the sake of quietness and to stop disturbances the officers should obtain orders drawn upon bankers and merchants for the pay. With these drafts they went to the bankers, seized them, put them in prison, and tortured them until they got the money.'

*Emperor recalls Nizām :* Under these circumstances, it is to be little wondered at that "the opinion prevailed that Nizāmu-l Mulk was the only man who could save the monarchy and stem the on-coming flood of Maratha invasion." Accordingly he was once again appealed to and summoned to the capital. He left Burhān-pur on 17 April 1737. The nature of the welcome may be indicated by the waiving of the Imperial prohibition against the beat of drums by any noble within three miles of the Emperor's residence.

"Nizāmu-l Mulk caused his elephant to kneel and, descending, made obeisance for the honour thus done him. Crowds thronged the road and impeded progress. Within the city, the roofs of the shops and houses were covered with sight-seers; while mendicants 'thicker than flies at a sweetmeat-seller's shop' gathered round the Nawab's elephant, paying no heed to the sticks and bamboos with which the attendants tried to drive them off. His elephant could do no more than creep along, and it was not till after mid-day that they reached the Delhi gate of the fort. On coming before the Emperor he made his offering and was honoured in return with a robe from the Emperor's own wardrobe and a jacket called a *charqab*, worn only by members of the Chaghatai house descended from Timūr. The highest title that a subject could bear, that of *Asaf Jāh* that is equal in dignity to Asaf the minister of King Solomon, was also conferred upon him. The mansion built by Sadullah Khān, the finest in Delhi, had been prepared for his quarters, and at the close of the day, trays of food were sent from the imperial kitchen, by the hands of eunuchs, and this practice was continued daily."

Only three events are worthy of note in the remaining life of Nizāmu-l Mulk : (1) His defeat at Bhopāl at the hands of Bāji

Rao ; (2) the invasion of India by Nādir Shāh ; and (3) the Nizām's final retirement into the Deccan and death in 1748. The latter two will be described in subsequent sections. Only the first need be dealt with here.

About a month after Nizāmu-l Mulk's restoration (August 1737) his son, Ghāziu-d dīn Khān Fīrūz Jang was made governor of Agra and Mālwa *vice* Rāja Jai Singh and Bāji Rao respectively. But the condition was that the Nizām should march against the Marathas in Mālwa. Accordingly, Asaf Jāh advanced south with about 30,000 troops as soon as the rains permitted. The Emperor was to follow with reinforcements, and Nizāmu-l Mulk's second son was to join with the army from the Deccan. But before this junction could be effected, Bāji Rao had already advanced into Central India. After a sharp engagement the Nizām was obliged to come to terms with the Marathas.

The convention was signed at Durai, 64 miles from Sironj (1738) : " In his own handwriting Nizāmu-l Mulk promised to grant Bāji Rao (1) the whole of Mālwa, (2) the complete sovereignty of the territory between the Narmada and the Chambal, (3) to obtain confirmation thereof from the Emperor, and (4) to use his best endeavours to obtain fifty lakhs of Rupees to pay Bāji Rao's expenses." After his humiliation, the Nizām re-entered Delhi only to be faced with a new crisis, viz. the invasion of Nādir Shāh. But before we proceed to deal with this crisis it is necessary to describe the state of the Empire at this stage.

#### SOME RELEVANT DATES

##### A. D.

- 1713 Deposition of Jahāndar Shāh ; accession of Farrukh-siyar (1713-19). Rise of the Saiyid Brothers (1712-20).
- 1714 Hindu-Muslim riot in Ahmedābad at the Holi festival. Bālāji. Vishwanāth becomes Peshwa.
- 1715 Saiyid Husain Ali sent to the Deccan ; death of Dāud Khān. Panni. Ajit Singh appointed viceroy of Gujarat. William Hamilton, British surgeon, operates upon Farrukh-siyar.
- 1716 Execution of Banda.
- 1717 Husain Ali Khān's treaty with Shāhu ratified by Farrukh-siyar ; grant of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi.
- 1718 Great famine in Gujarat.
- 1719 Farrukh-siyar deposed ; followed by Rafiu-d Darajat. Neku-siyar and Rafiu-d Daula ; accession of Muhammad Shāh (1719-48).

- 1720 Nizāmu-l Mulk retires into the Deccan. Murder of Saiyid Husain Ali Khān. Earth-quake at Delhi. Ibrāhim Shāh proclaimed by Saiyid Abdullah Khān ; both overthrown by Muhammad Shāh. Death of Bālāji Vishwanāth Peshwa.
- 1722 Nizāmu-l Mulk made *wazir*.
- 1724 Nizāmu-l Mulk again retires into the Deccan. Murder of Ajit Singh ; accession of Abhaya Singh. Bāji Rao's raid into Mālwa.
- 1725 Marathas levy *chauth* in Gujarat. Nizāmu-l Mulk becomes independent in the Deccan.
- 1726 Bāji Rao invades Karnātak.
- 1728 Treaty between Bāji Rao and Nizāmu-l Mulk. Jai Singh completes his Astronomical Tables from his seven years' observations from his own Observatory at Jaipur.
- 1729 Tribute of Gujarat formally granted to Bāji Rao by Sarbuland Khān ; Bāji Rao joins Rāja Chatrasāl.
- 1730 Shāh of Persia defeated by Nādir Shāh.
- 1731 Nādir Shāh takes Herāt.
- 1734 Jai Singh, governor of Mālwa, resigns the province to the Peshwa.
- 1735 Death of Chatrasāl Bundela ; bequeaths Kālpi, Sironj, Kotā, etc. to Bālāji Rao.
- 1736 Nādir Shāh becomes Emperor of Persia. Mālwa and Gujarat conferred on Bāji Rao by Emperor's patent.
- 1737-8 Nizāmu-l Mulk recalled to Court ; defeated by Bāji Rao ; Convention of Sironj. Kandahār capitulates to Nādir Shāh.
- 1739 Nādir Shāh invades India ; battle of Karnāl and sack of Delhi. Bassein captured by Chimāji Appā from the Portuguese.



## CHAPTER XIX

### DISINTEGRATION OF THE EMPIRE

The history of the Empire at this stage is a tangled skein with many threads crossing and re-crossing. To unravel it in detail would involve pursuit of the histories of the several states into which the Mughal Empire was fast resolving itself. Without entering, therefore, into the mutual rivalries and conflicts between the *new powers* that were coming into the field, nor making any attempt to go into the personal histories of the founders of principalities, like Saadat Khān, Safdar Jung, and Ali Verdi Khān, nor examining the *internal* affairs of peoples like the Bundelas, Rajputs, Rohillas, Marathas and the Europeans,—each of whom contributed to hasten the fall of the Empire—we shall merely outline here the break up of the Mughal dominion. Our study, thus restricted, would include only the following topics : (1) The virtual separation of the provinces of Oudh, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, from the Empire, on the one hand, and (2) the absorption of the provinces of Gujarat, Mālwa, and Bundelkhand into the expanding Maratha dominion, on the other. The further history of Marathā expansion, in so far as it has direct bearing on our subject, will appear in our account of the two fateful foreign invasions that are to follow. Beyond this, the struggle between the *new powers*—the triangular contest between the Nawābs, the Marathas and the English—for the hegemony of Hindustan does not strictly fall within our purview. If the Nawāb of Oudh and Bengal, like the Nizām in the Deccan, still maintained the pretence of being Imperial officers, they did so merely to strengthen their own claims with the prestige of the Empire which continued to be a rallying cry down to the 'Mutiny of 1857.'

*Oudh* : The founder of the independent principality of Oudh, which was dissolved by Dalhousie in 1856, was Mīr Muhammad Amīn Saadat Khān Burhānu-l Mulk. He was leader of the Irāni or Persian party at the Mughal Court, and hence a rival of the Irāni *wazīr*, Nizāmu-l Mulk, whose history we have already traced. He was *faujdar* of Hindaun and Bayānā (about 50 miles s. w. of



Disintegration of the Empire



Agra) in 1719-20, and, in spite of being a Saiyid and a Shiah had seen his advantage in joining the enemies of Saiyid Husain Ali Khān. He was well rewarded for his participation in the plot to assassinate the Mir Bakhshi, being elevated to the rank of 5,000 *zāt* and 3,000 *sawār*, with the title of Saadat Khān Bahādur (Lord of Good Fortune). For two years after this (1720-22) he was governor of Agra, when his status was further increased to 6,000 *zāt* and 5,000 *sawār*.

At this time the turbulent Jāts of Bharatpur joined with their clansmen in the Agra and Mathura districts and rose in revolt. The new governor of Agra marched against them and succeeded in capturing four of their strongholds. But he could not follow up this success as he was recalled to Court and asked to march against Rāja Ajit Singh of Mārwar. The latter, having been a supporter of the Saiyid brothers, avenged their fall by following an anti-Muslim policy and showed open hostility to the Imperial government. The other nobles at the Court being reluctant to undertake the punitive campaign, Saadat Khān welcomed the opportunity for further distinction. But unfortunately for him the proposal proved abortive on account of opposition from the jealous courtiers. And to make matters worse, the Jāts took advantage of Saadat's absence, and in an attempt to subdue them, his deputy, Nilkanth Nagar, met his death. Saadat Khān, under these circumstances, had once more to grapple with the Jāts personally. But his stars seemed to be against him. His failure resulted in the transfer of the governorship of Agra to Rāja Jai Singh Kachhwaha, on 1st September 1722, as the latter made that a condition to his commanding the expedition against the Jāts. The Emperor further showed his displeasure towards Saadat Khān by not even granting him audience but forthwith directing him to proceed to Oudh immediately.

On 9th September 1722 he took charge of his new *subah*; and its former governor, Rāja Girdhar Bahādur, was transferred to Mālwa. From this date in fact, though not in name, may be commenced the history of Oudh as an independent Muslim principality. The title of 'King of Oudh' was not assumed, however, until 1816, when at the instigation of Warren Hastings, Ghāzi-ud-din Haider, the 7th ruler of the house of Saadat Khān, adopted it. The internal history of the *subahdāri*, which is largely comprised of Saadat Khān's efforts to subjugate the recalcitrant chiefs and *zamindars* and to consolidate his province, need not detain us here. Some time in 1724 he married his daughter to his nephew Safdar Jung and appointed him deputy-governor of Oudh. With the *Subah* thus secured, Saadat Khān preferred to re-enter the high politics of Delhi. A detailed account of the subsequent part played by the Nawābs of Oudh in

the destinies of the Empire will follow shortly. Suffice it to note here that Saadat Khān, in 1732, undertook to check the Maratha advance into North India, and made various proposals, such as his appointment to the *subahdāri* of Agra, Mālwa, etc. (in addition to his holding Oudh) with a view to enable him to withstand the Marathas. But these attempts and schemes proved futile, owing to the usual opposition from rival nobles at Court. Nevertheless, Saadat Khān was able to inflict a defeat on the Marathas, in the vicinity of Agra, towards the close of March 1737, to which reference has already been made. The exaggerated reports of this doubtful triumph, sent by Saadat Khān to the Imperial Court, had very untoward effects : On the one hand, they drew the might of Bāji Rao upon Delhi, as the Peshwa wanted to contradict Saadat's report of the alleged Maratha discomfiture in the most unmistakable manner, and therefore led his army to the very gates of the Imperial capital, as already described ; and on the other, Saadat's rivals made use of these happenings to discredit him before the Emperor. This misadventure led to further fatalities, as Nādir Shāh invaded India soon after (January 1739), and dealt a blow that left the Empire "bleeding and prostrate." It is not surprising that Saadat Khān finally conspired with the invader to humiliate the ungrateful Emperor, and after a momentary exaltation, committed suicide on 19 March 1739. Safdar Jung succeeded him in Oudh, but more about him later.

*Bengal, Bihar and Orissa* : The history of the eastern provinces of the Empire, viz., Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, is somewhat similar to that of Oudh and the Deccan, whose accession to virtual independence we have noticed above. While these provinces nominally owned the sovereignty of the Mughal Emperor, paid tribute and even invoked his aid in times of need, otherwise ignored the Empire altogether. They, therefore, mark the first stage in the dissolution of the Empire ; for the most part their thoughts and activities centred round their own self-aggrandisement. A brief account of the *subahdāri* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa should here suffice.

At the time of Aurangzeb's death (1707) Murshid Kuli Khān was deputy-governor (*naib-nāzim*) and chief revenue officer (*diwān*) of Bengal and Orissa. But the absence of the governor, Prince Azimu-sh Shān, who spent his time at the Imperial Court, made Murshid Kuli Khān the *de facto* ruler of the two provinces. He was made *de jure* governor of Bengal in 1713, by the Emperor Farrukh-siyar ; Orissa was added on to his charge in 1719. "Murshid Kuli's strong, honest and efficient administra-

tion, love of justice, and strict enforcement of peace and order," observes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "increased the wealth and happiness of the people and fostered the growth of trade in the country." He was succeeded by his son-in-law, Shujā-ud-daulah Asad Jung, in 1727. Bihar was added on to the two provinces in 1733. This triple charge was handed down by Shujā-ud-daulah to his successor Sarafrāz Khān in 1739, still in a prosperous condition. But the licentiousness and excesses of the new Nawāb led to the usurpation of Ali Verdi Khān, one of his ablest officers. Ali Verdi Khān was till then deputy-governor at Patna. He defeated and slew the worthless Sarafrāz, on 10th April 1740, at the battle of Gheria. Bribery secured confirmation of this usurpation, by the Emperor, whose assistance Ali Verdi Khān sought against his enemies.

The most formidable of these were the Marathas under Raghujī Bhonsle. The story of this conflict may be held over for the present. We must now turn our attention to the encroachments of the Marathas in other parts of the Mughal dominion, which resulted in their appropriation of the three rich provinces of Gujarat, Mālwa, and Bundelkhand. This has been incidentally referred to already. A few observations, however, on the actual separation of these provinces are necessary.

*Gujarat* : Rāja Abhai Singh of Jodhpur, it will be remembered, was governor of the Mughal *subah* of Gujarat at the moment the incursions of the Marathas, already alluded to, took place. The Senāpati, Yeshwant Rao, was in charge of the collection of *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* in Gujarat. But he left this task in the more capable hands of Pilāji Gāikwād who had practically made himself master of Baroda. From these beginnings arose the present progressive State of Baroda.

The cowardly Abhai Singh got rid of Pilāji by assassination, but the Marathas retrieved their position under Pilāji's son Dāmāji Gāikwād. The latter not only recovered Dabhai and Baroda, which Abhai had taken, but attacked Ahmedābad and carried fire and sword to the very frontiers of Jodhpur (1733). The result was that Abhai Singh gave way, left the towns conquered by Dāmāji in his possession, and promised to pay *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* as before, besides 80,000 rupees from the revenues of Ahmedābad. After this Abhai Singh retired to Jodhpur, leaving Gujarat in nominal charge of Ratan Singh Bhandāri. Matters went from bad to worse, and the Marathas became virtual masters of Gujarat from 1735.

*Mālwa* : Rāja Jai Singh of Amber was governor of Mālwa in 1710. When he was called upon to subdue the Jāts of Agra province in 1722, Rāja Girdhar Bahādur was appointed in Mālwa. After a short interval of absence he was reinstated in 1725, and was ever

after ambitious to found his own dynasty there. His successor could continue in that charge only by promising the Emperor to keep away the Marathas. But the Rajputs, especially Sawāi Jai Singh, were dreaming of a Hindu confederacy against the Mughals. With this object the Marathas were encouraged, nay invited into Mālwa. On the other side, the Nizām, anxious to divert the Marathas away from the Deccan, also connived at Bāji Rao's northward movements. At the end of his expedition (1723-24) the Peshwa left three of his commanders in Mālwa, and they became respectively founders of the kingdoms of Indore (Holkar), Gwalior (Sindhia), and Dhār (Pawār). In the expedition of December 1728 Rāja Girdhar died fighting gallantly against the Marathas, at Sārangpur, 50 miles to the N. E. of Dewās. Encouraged by this victory, the latter marched into Bundelkhand being invited by Rāja Chhatrasāl who was fighting against the Mughal general Muhammad Khān Bangash.

*Bundelkhand* : Bāji Rao, for his timely assistance, was rewarded with the cession of a third of Chhatrasāl's kingdom, yielding an annual revenue of 33 *lakhs* of rupees. Two years after this the brave Bundela died at the age of 82 (1731), leaving the following will to his two sons, Hirde Shāh and Jagatrai :—

"1. With the exception of expeditions beyond the Jamna or the Chambal, both brothers should join Bāji Rao Saheb in every campaign, and should share in the plunder and conquer lands in proportion to the troops provided by them.

"2. If Bāji Rao should be involved in Deccan warfare, the two brothers should defend, for at least two months, the fortress of Bundelkhand.

"3. King Chhatrasāl has looked upon Bāji Rao Saheb as his son. Bāji Rao should therefore guard his (sons) as if they were his blood-brothers."

Consequently Bāji Rao got Kālpi, Sāgar, Jhānsi, Sironj and Hirdnagar. Prof. Sinha observes, "The importance of their acquisition can never be exaggerated. They brought Bāji Rao into direct touch with the Doab, and with one of the imperial cities, Agra, to which Kālpi is so close. From this vantage point he was not only to dominate all Central India, but strike terror into Delhi and the Doab." Bāji Rao's march on Delhi, in 1737, has already been referred to. The Maratha activities from the death of Chhatrasāl to that event need not be here described in detail. Their net result was that the Imperial generals being foiled one after another, the Emperor was obliged to recognise Bāji Rao's claim to

*chauth* from Mālwa and thirteen *lakhs* of rupees from the revenues of the territory south of the Chambal. But the Marathas had already carried their depredations into most of Rajputāna and the Doab, and to impress the Emperor of the helplessness of his condition, Bāji Rao had led his expedition to Delhi. The expected happened : the government of Mālwa was conferred upon the Peshwa in addition to thirteen *lakhs* above mentioned. As a last resort, the Nizām was summoned to the rescue of the Empire. Towards the close of 1737 he made his last attempt to drive away the Marathas out of North India. The result was his defeat at Sironj, and the convention of Durai Sarai (16 January 1738) already described. When the Empire was smarting under this humiliation, a worse calamity was awaiting it in the north-west. The doom of the Empire which was weakened from within, as shown above, was sealed by two fateful invaders that came from without. First Nādir Shāh and then Ahmad Shāh Abdālī dealt the tottering Empire blows which it was ill-equipped to sustain. We have only to add a few words about the conditions in Rajputāna and the Punjab at this time to enable the reader to visualise the situation that must have tempted these foreign attacks.

*Rajputāna* : The Rajputs who at one time had been the bulwark of the Empire, thanks to Aurangzeb's disastrous attitude towards them and the growing weakness of the later Mughal Emperors, now realised that their interests lay elsewhere than in the Mughal Empire. Internally also, Rajputāna was torn by dissensions between and within its three principal houses of the Sisodias, the Rāthors and the Kachhwahs. "The disorder and destruction following from this contest for primacy," observes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "were immensely multiplied by the entrance of another factor into Rajput politics in the middle of the 18th century, which ended only in the total ruin and humiliation of this noble race... The Maratha and the Pindhari ravaged the land. Disorder, public plunder, economic ruin, and moral degradation were the chronic condition of Rājasthān from the declining years of Muhammad Shāh...." Bāji Rao's extortions in Rajputāna form alike a lurid commentary on the weakness of the Rajputs and the strength of the Marathas. "After long higgling, the Mahārāna had to sign a treaty promising to pay an annual tribute of Rs. 1,60,000 to cover which the Banhāda pargana was ceded to the Marathas."



*The Punjab :* Though at this time the Punjab enjoyed peace owing to the strong and benevolent rule of its governor Zakāriya Khān I (1726-45), the province had suffered much on account of the ravages of plunderers like Isā Khān and Husain Khān Kheshgi. Towards the N. W. frontier were a number of intractable tribes who could be kept under control only when the power of the Mughal Emperors was strong both at Delhi and at Kabul. At the present time they afforded a gun-powder magazine that might burst out at any moment, and their depredations across the border gave a convenient excuse for Nādir Shāh to lead punitive expeditions into these shady regions.

#### *The Persian Invasion :*

Nādir Shāh was a Turkish adventurer who had established himself as the ruler of Persia in 1736. Persia had fallen on evil days and the Safawis had been supplanted by Afghan aggressors in 1722. Nādir Shāh, like Napoleon, though a foreigner himself, proved the saviour and then the champion of his adopted country. This ambitious and successful adventurer carried the war into the homelands of the Afghan usurpers and thereby came into clash with the Mughal governor of Kabul. Early in 1737 Nādir Shāh marched against Kandahār with 80,000 men. "So long as that centre of Afghan power was not destroyed, it would remain a menace to the safety of Persia and constantly disturb the peace and prosperity of Khurāsān. Moreover, without the conquest of Qandahār the full heritage of the Safawis could not be said to have come into his possession." The fort of Kandahār fell after a year's siege, March 1737 to March 1738. But Nādir Shāh treated the defeated Afghans very kindly : "released all the prisoners taken, bestowed pensions on the tribal chiefs, enlisted the clansmen in his army, and by transplanting the Ghilzais to Naishāpur and other places in Khurāsān (the former homes of the Abdālis) and posting Abdāli chieftains as governors of Southern Afghanistan (Qandahār, Girishk, Bist and Zamindawar), kept his former enemies usefully employed in his service. *His policy was to tempt the other Afghan forts to surrender to him by creating a reputation for himself as a merciful enemy and liberal master, and to enlist the Afghan soldiers under his banners as devoted supporters of his projected conquests of Central Asia and India.*"

We have not the space for a detailed statement of all the reasons for Nādir Shāh's invasion of India. In the last analysis this must be attributed to the ambitions of Nādir Shāh, on the one hand, and the apparent weakness of the Mughal Empire on the other. "Nādir Shāh," as Irvine points out, "was no mere soldier, no savage leader of a savage horde but a master of diplomacy and state-craft as well as of the sword. The profoundness of his diplomacy was no less remarkable than the greatness of his generalship in war, and the wisdom of his policy to the vanquished after his victories in the field."

The Mughal Emperor had long been in the practice of exchanging ambassadors with the Persian Court. This diplomatic usage was suddenly discontinued when Nādir Shāh ascended the throne. The new ruler of Persia resented this all the more, because Muhammad Shāh had maintained friendly relations with Mir Wais and his son Husain, the usurper of Kandahār, despite the latter's raid into Multan. Nādir Shāh duly informed the Mughal Court of his intended campaign in Kandahār, and requested the Emperor not to give shelter to the Afghan fugitives in Kabul. The Emperor, no doubt, promised to do the needful, but failed to carry out his undertaking. A second ambassador was sent to Delhi, repeating the request, with no better result. In 1737, therefore, when hostilities had already begun in Kandahār, Nādir Shāh despatched a third envoy to the Mughal Court expecting an urgent and clear reply. But the Mughal sphinx was as silent as ever. A year passed, and matters crossed the frontiers of diplomacy—Nādir Shāh decided on invading India.

The governor of Kabul, Nāzir Khān, was not in the good books of the party in power at Delhi. His alarming reports about the impending danger were therefore discredited. He failed to get even the minimum subsidies to maintain his army in a state of defence. The soldiers were ill-fed, ill-armed and five years in arrears of pay. In the words of Ghulām Husain, 'It was impossible for Nāzir Khān to prevent Nādir Shāh's entrance into India. The Government was rotten, the Emperor was powerless. No money was sent to maintain the administration in Afghanistan. The subahdār, therefore, sought his own comfort and lived at Peshāwar, entrusting the fort of Kabul to a *qiladār* with orders to control and watch the passes leading into India.' The Punjab, as stated previously, was at this time under its governor, Zakāriya Khān. He was, no doubt, "a brave and an active soldier" and a "good administrator;" but being a Turāni foreigner, he was hated by the Hindustānis at Court who enjoyed favour with the Emperor. His appeals for reinforcements in men

and money, therefore, fell on deaf ears. The gate-ways of India being thus in no state of defence, Nādir Shāh's invasion was both tempted and facilitated.

On 10th May 1738, the Persian entered Northern Afghanistan. Ghazni fell on the 31st. The Mughal governor fled, but the people were well treated by the conqueror. The Hazāras in the hills south-west of Ghazni resisted, and were ruthlessly destroyed. Nādir then advanced upon Kabul, which after a brief defence fell on the 19th June. Here he heard from his envoy at the Delhi Court that the Mughal Emperor would neither reply nor give him his *congé*. At this Nādir Shāh despatched an urgent letter of protest with a fast courier accompanied by some leading men of Kabul to offer explanation of the steps taken by the Persians. In this he pointed out how the Emperor had broken faith with him, and explained that in punishing the rebellious Afghan he was really serving the best interests of the Mughal Empire. But as ill-luck would have it, the messengers were murdered within Mughal territory and Nādir Shāh had to march against the clans who were responsible for this outrage. He left Kabul on the 19th July, and Jalālābad surrendered on 7th September 1738. The men were massacred and the women taken captive by way of reprisals against the assassination of the envoys. Some time was then spent in regulating the administration of the conquered country, after which Nādir Shāh marched into the Punjab. Peshāwar was entered on 18th November. Wazirābad on the Chenab (60 miles N. W. of Lahore) was crossed on the 8th January 1739. Zakāriya Khān, governor of the Punjab, finding resistance impossible, surrendered on 12th January and thereby saved the city of Lahore from the wrath of the invader. He was made to pay a contribution of 20 *lakhs* of rupees and retained in his governorship. His son joined the train of the invader with 500 retainers "evidently as a hostage for his father's fidelity." Similarly, Nāzir Khān was restored to the viceroyalty of Kabul and Peshāwar. "A Persian force was detached to guard the ferries and seize the boats on the rivers of the Punjab and see that travellers to and from the Persian army during its stay in India could easily pass. *Thus the flanks and rear of the invaders were completely secured.*"

The situation is well described by Anandrām Mukhlis in his *Tazkira* : 'Nādir Shāh was now in possession of all the country as far as Attok, and Muhammad Shāh and his advisers could no longer remain blind to the danger that threatened them. They understood that *this was no ordinary foe against whom they had to contend, no mere plunderer who would be sated with the spoil of a province and then return to his own country, but a leader of unshakable resolution, who shaped his sword.*' But the Emperor and his nobles failed to do the needful and the country was despoiled by the invader : Wazirābad, Imānābad, and Gujrāt, towns which, for population

might almost be called cities, were levelled up with the earth. Nothing was respected, no sort of violence remained unpractised; property of all kinds became the spoil of the plunderer, and women the prey of the ravisher. On the 15th of the month, the Shāh continued his march towards Shāh-Jahānābad. He advanced rapidly. Leaving his camp equipage at Shāhābad, (17 miles E. of Ambāla) on the 15th Zi-l kada he appeared in the neighbourhood of Karnāl (20 miles from Pānipat), where Muhammad Shāh's army awaited his coming.

*Battle of Karnāl*: The fateful battle was fought on the 13th February 1739. 'The heroic efforts of Amiru-l umra and his prodigies of valour could not prevail against the Persians, who far exceeded the Indians in number,—and had, moreover, the advantage of having been placed in position by the Shāh himself. The Mughals broke at length and fled; but Amiru-l umra maintained the combat until, mortally wounded in the face, he fell covered with glory.... Burhānu-l Mulk and Nisār Muhammad Khān Bahādur became prisoners.' 'It is probable,' states the *Bayān-i Waki*, 'that if the army of Hindustan had been fully provided with artillery, the Persians would not have been able to oppose it.'

'The Persian Emperor sent a message offering to treat for peace; for,' says Anandrām, 'though so powerful, he was not one to overlook the advantages of negotiation. Wazir-l Mamālik Asaf Jāh was opposed to the proposition; but his argument did not prevail with the Emperor. On the 16th of the month Asaf Jāh Bahādur and Āzimullah Khān Bahādur were deputed to the Shāh, to conclude the negotiations; they returned to camp that evening.

The dying *wazir*, Khān Daurān Samsāmu-d daulah, had enjoined, "Never take the Emperor to Nādir, nor conduct Nādir to Delhi, but send away that evil from this point by any means that you can devise." But the inevitable came to pass. The unsuspecting Asaf Jāh and the Emperor Mahammad Shāh, during their second visit\* to Nādir Shāh's camp, were surrounded and practically taken

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\* Many details are omitted in this summary account. Nizāmu-l Mulk in his first visit to the Persian camp had negotiated for Nādir Shāh's return on payment of Rs. 50 lakhs. On his return, by Nādir Shāh's request, the Emperor paid a visit to the Persian camp, and was well received. After Muhammad Shāh's retirement, Saadat Khān, owing to his jealousy towards the Nizām, suggested to Nādir Shāh that he should secure Nizāmu-l Mulk's person as security for payment of the promised indemnity, and also that if they marched to Delhi, Nādir Shāh could extort more. The

prisoners, it is alleged, at the instigation of Saadat Khān Burhānu-l Mulk. Nādir Shāh compelled them to march to Delhi with the hope of extorting from the Emperor a larger indemnity than had been promised in the camp. The Maratha ambassador at the Mughal Court, escaping from the embarrassing situation, with a sigh of relief exclaimed : " God has averted a great danger from me, and enabled me to escape with honour ! The Chaghatai Empire is gone, Irāni Empire has commenced ! " Anandrām too states, ' The Mughal monarchy appeared to all to be at an end.'

The conqueror's justification was, as he put it, addressing the Mughal Emperor :

' It is strange that you should be so unconcerned and regardless of your own affairs, that notwithstanding I wrote you several letters, sent an Ambassador, and testified a friendship for you, your ministers should not think proper to send me a satisfactory answer ; and by reason of your want of command and discipline over your people, one of my Ambassadors, contrary to all laws, has been killed in your dominions. Even when I entered your empire, you seemed under no concern for your affairs, nor so much as sent to ask who I was or what was my design. . . . Moreover, your predecessors were wont to take the *Jeziah* from the infidels, and you in your reign have given it to them, having, in these 20 years, suffered the empire to be over-run by them. But as hitherto the race of Temur have not injured or misbehaved towards the Seffi (Safawi) family, and the people of Persia, I shall not take the empire from you. Only, as your indolence and pride have obliged me to march so far, and that I have been put to an extraordinary expense, and my men, on account of the long marches, are much fatigued, and in want of necessaries, I must go to Delhi, and there continue some days, until the army is refreshed, and the *peishecush* (tribute), that Nizam-al Muluck has agreed to (50 *lakhs* of rupees), is made good to me ; after that, I shall leave you to look after your own affairs.'

*The Massacre at Delhi* : The happenings related above had created a state of tense excitement and nervousness at Delhi. Even before the tragedy of Karnāl, according to Anandrām :

' Many were the false reports circulated, which there is no need to record here, and such was the state of the town, that, but for the vigilance of *Kotwāl* Hāji Fulād Khān, it must have been plundered, and the Persian army would have found the work done. The *Kotwāl*, no ordinary

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(Footnote continued from p. 653.)

Nizām on his unsuspecting second visit was forcibly detained. This made the Emperor pay a second visit also. He too being secured was prevailed upon to go to Delhi together with the Persian host. This culminated in a tragedy.

man, was at his post day and night ; his exertions were unceasing, and, wherever there was an appearance of sedition, he seized and punished the guilty parties. The roads were infested with malefactors, and there was safety for none.'

Nādir Shāh, according to all accounts, appears to have acted with great dignity and restraint. But the situation was such that, if all had gone well to the end, it would have been a great surprise. However, a clash occurred somewhere in the city, between the citizens and the army of occupation. Then followed a repetition of the carnage and loss witnessed during Timūr's visitation. The loss in lives and treasure was indeed immense. No purpose would be served by dwelling either upon the horrors of the holocaust or counting the casualties. Neither age nor sex were respected by the furies let loose upon the city ; the miscreants in some cases appear to have escaped leaving the innocent to be victimised. Several men and women were driven to insanity and suicide in their desperation. The streets and houses were glutted with corpses, and soon the stench of these threatened to choke the living. The debris could be cleared and cleansed only by means of fire. The carnage lasted only for five hours, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Sunday, 11 March, 1739.)

'By degrees the violence of the flames subsided,' writes Ānandrām, 'but the bloodshed, the devastation, and the ruin of families were irreparable. For a long time the streets remained strewn with corpses, as the walks of a garden with dead flowers and leaves. The town was reduced to ashes, and had the appearance of a plain consumed with fire. All the regal jewels and property and the contents of the treasury were seized by the Persian conqueror in the citadel. He thus became possessed of treasure to the amount of 60 *lacs* of rupees and several thousand *ashrafis* ; plate of gold to the value of one *kror* of rupees, and the jewels, many of which were unrivalled in beauty by any in the world, were valued at about 50 *krors*. The Peacock throne alone, constructed at great pains in the reign of Shāh Jahān, had cost one *kror* of rupees. Elephants, horses, and precious stuffs, whatever pleased the conqueror's eye, more indeed than can be enumerated, became his spoil. In short the accumulated wealth of 348 years changed masters in a moment.'

In the estimation of Fraser, 200,000 inhabitants of the Mughal Empire had fallen victims to the Persian invader ; and, in addition to 70 *krors* of rupees, Nādir Shāh carried away with him " 100 elephants, 7,000 horses, 10,000 camels, 100 eunuchs, 130 writers, 200 smiths, 300 masons and builders, 100 stone-cutters, and 200 carpenters." A daughter of " Iesdan Bakhsh, the son of Kām Bakhsh, and grandson of Aurangzebe " was given in marriage to 'Nesr Allah

Mirza, Nādir Shāh's son. Finally, Nādir Shāh read the following homily to the Mughal Emperor :—

'In the first place, you must seize all the omras' jagirs, and pay each of them, according to his mansab and rank, with ready money out of the treasury. You are to allow none to keep any force of his own, but you yourself are constantly to keep 60,000 chosen horsemen, at sixty rupees per month : every ten men to have *dehbashi* (officer over ten men), every ten *dehbashis* one *sudival* (officer over 100), and every ten *sudivals* one *hazāri*. You ought to be well acquainted with the merits of each : his name, family and nation (race), not allowing any of them—officers, soldiers or others—to be idle or inactive ; (and) when an occasion may require, despatch a sufficient number, under the command of one whom you can trust for conduct, courage and fidelity, and when that business is over, recall them immediately, not letting any person to stay too long in command, for fear of bad consequences. *You are more particularly to beware of Nizāmu-l Muluk, whom by his conduct, I find to be full of cunning and self-interest and more ambitious than becomes a subject.*

*Persian Annexations* : Nādir Shāh, before his departure on 5 May 1739, after a stay of 57 days, placed the crown of Hindustan on the head of Muhammad Shāh and tied a jewelled sword round his waist ; and the Emperor gratefully declared (or was gracefully made to declare) :

"As the generosity of the Shāhan Shāh has made me a second time master of a crown and a throne and exalted me among the crowned heads of the world, I beg to offer as my tribute the provinces of my Empire west of the river Indus, from Kashmir to Sindh, and in addition the subahs of Thatta and the ports subordinate to it."

Thus, the most vital part of the Mughal Empire, viz., the Trans-Indus provinces including Afghanistan, was now finally lost to the descendants of Bābur. "A considerable territory east of the Indus had also been seized by Nādir by right of victory over the local subahdārs before the battle of Karnāl, and his right to their revenue was not disputed, though they continued to be governed by Muhammad Shāh's officers. The governor of Lahore now signed an agreement to send Nādir 20 lakhs of Rupees a year on this account, to remove the reason for any Persian garrison being left east of the Indus."

#### THE AFGHAN INVASION :

Nādir Shāh did not live long to reap the fruits of his triumphs. Eight years after his Indian invasion he died by the hand of an

assassin. We must now turn to the other invader : Ahmad Shāh Abdāli or Durrāni. He was one of Nādir Shāh's chief lieutenants. Of him the conqueror had said, "I have not found in Irān, Turān, or Hind, any man equal to Ahmad Abdāli in capacity and character." This estimate of him was justified by Abdāli's successes. After the death of Nādir Shāh he established himself as independent ruler of Kandahār and Kabul, and consequently laid claim to Western Punjab as the rightful successor of Nādir. To make good this claim he led successive expeditions into Hindustan which culminated in the great disaster (for us) at Pānīpat in 1761.

The situation in Hindustan leading up to this catastrophe is too complicated to be satisfactorily unravelled within the space at our disposal. We shall, therefore, here touch upon only a few of the most salient features to enable the reader to visualise the circumstances attending the extinction of the Mughal Empire. Although, the last descendant of Bābur to bear the name and wear the crown of the Mughal Emperor was Bahādur Shāh II, who died in exile at Rangoon in 1862—a full century after the Third Battle of Pānīpat (1761)—the Empire might be considered to have been truly extinguished with the murder of Alamgir II, on 28th November, 1759. His son Ali Guhar, was at that time away from the capital, and, although he proclaimed himself Emperor Shāh Alam at Allahābad, he was not destined to return to Delhi except as the protégé of new powers (the Marathas and the English) that were contending for the mastery of his Empire. Meanwhile a puppet was raised to the throne, as Shāh Jahān III, by the rebellious *wazīr*, Gāziu-d dīn Fīrūz Jang ; but he never counted for a legitimate successor. This revolution was precipitated to a very large extent by the invasions of Ahmad Shāh Abdāli, which began in 1748 and ended in 1761.

*Five Durrāni Expeditions* : Ahmad Shāh Durrani, like Bābur, led altogether five expeditions into Hindustan, the fifth ending with a victory on the field of Pānīpat ; but the difference between the two was that the former, unlike the latter, did not follow up his triumph. The situation in India was somewhat similar on the two occasions : In 1526 the Empire of Delhi had shrunk to a kingdom, as in 1761 ; it was moreover very much distracted and weakened by internal squabbles and external dangers from its own nominal vassals ; a Hindu power, in both instances, was threatening to eclipse the Delhi suzerain (the Rajput confederacy under Rāṇa Sanga in the case of the Lodis, and the Maratha confederacy under the Peshwa in the case of the Mughals, the latter being by far the more formidable) ; the foreigner, under similar circumstances, was invited as an ally to support internal contentions ; but as ill-luck would have it, the foreigner came to



dominate over everything and everybody. The differences were : Bābur came to stay, Abdāli was content with a military triumph and the booty it brought him ; Bābur fought against the ruler of Delhi, Abdāli against the Marathas, the virtual enemies and doubtful allies of the Emperor ; Bābur had been invited by Rāṇa Sanga (among others) the leader of the Hindu confederacy, Abdāli's principal adversary was the Maratha who—far from co-operating with the parties inviting him—took the main responsibility of fighting the enemies of the country.

It will be remembered that the Punjab, west of the Indus, had been annexed to Nādir Shāh's dominion with a further claim on the revenues of a part of Eastern Punjab as well. Abdāli reasserted these rights, and rallying all the Afghans, conquered Peshāwar and marched on Lahore. Hayātu-llah, one of the sons of the great Zakāriya Khān, usurped the *subah* and invited Abdāli to India to support his usurpation of his elder brother Yahiyā's deputy-governorship. But when the invader actually came, blazing his path with fire and loot, Hayātu-llah appeared to have felt the enormity of his blunder, and attempted resistance when it was too late. Under the circumstances he had to bow

Low before the blast,  
And let the legions thunder past.

At such a moment of grave crisis the Mughal Emperor and his Court did not seem to have recovered from the paralytic stroke of Nādir Shāh's invasion.

'Instead of being impressed with the importance of attending to the affairs of his kingdom, and turning his earnest attention as became an Emperor towards the management of the country, Muhammad Shāh from the commencement of his reign, displayed the greatest carelessness in his government, spending all his time in sport and play. This neglect on the part of the Sovereign was speedily taken advantage of by all the *amirs* and nobles, who usurped possession of *subas* and *parganas*, and appropriated to themselves the revenues of those provinces, which in former days were paid into the Royal treasury, and amounted to several *krors* of rupees. *From these provinces not one farthing found its way into the Royal chest ;* but a small revenue was still derived from those few *khalisa parganas* which yet remained faithful to their allegiance. *As the Royal treasury became gradually emptied, the Emperor's army was reduced to great straits, and at last entirely broken up ;* whilst the nobles of the land, who in the time of former sovereigns could never have got together such an amount of wealth, or so large a force, now amassed large sums of money from their own *jagirs*, and from those Government lands of which they had seized possession, and from the *jagirs* of others, a twentieth portion of which they did not give to the rightful owners. With this wealth they were able to keep up an

immense army, with which the Emperor was unable to cope. Thus the Emperor found himself more circumscribed than his nobles, upon whom he, in fact, became dependent, and was unable to depose or displace any one of them.'

However, by a mere fluke of fortune, belated though the Imperial attempt was to withstand Ahmad Shāh's invasion, the enemy was beaten at the battle of Mānpur, on 11 March, 1748. The Imperial army was under the nominal command of Prince Ahmad, assisted by the *wazir* Kamru-d dīn Khān and Safdar Jang, the successor of Sa'adullah Khān, Nawāb of Oudh. Abdālī's precipitate retreat after this accidental defeat was due to an error of judgment arising from a miscalculation of his foe's fitful strength. However, this was a stroke of good fortune, which saved the Empire for the time-being. The Mughals considered discretion the better part of valour and dared not follow up the victory with a pursuit. If they had done so, Abdālī would probably have thought twice before he ventured into India again. But both sides exaggerated each other's vantage!

Prince Ahmad returned to find his father dead, and promptly ascended the throne as Emperor Ahmad Shāh.

Ahmad Shāh was 22 at his accession, but "the Emperor's mind inclined to the society of vulgar persons (only), and he practised evil deeds which made him a shame to the country." Under the evil direction of his depraved mother Udham Bai and her shameless paramour Jāvid Khān, the administration grew weak and degraded; "the pillars of the State were daily shaken; (and) the Emperor never inquired about the realm, the soldiery, or the treasury,—the three foundations of an Empire." He buried himself, in his *harem* for weeks together and indulged in all kinds of puerilities and frivolities. "Never since Timūr's time," laments a Delhi historian, "had a eunuch exercised such power in the State (as did Jāvid); hence the Government became unsettled. The hereditary peers felt humiliated by having to make their petitions through a slave and to pay court to him before any affair of State could be transacted." After a fatuous reign of six years, Emperor Ahmad Shāh was dethroned by one of his officers, Imādu-l Mulk, and imprisoned and blinded by formal order of his successor Alamgīr II, who was placed on the throne in 1754. It is pathetic to note that when the fallen Emperor cried in his agony of heart and thirst for water to drink, Saifullah, the officer in charge, held up to his lips some water put in a pot-sherd lying in the dust: the King of kings of an hour ago was glad to drink from it!

The next two invasions of Ahmad Shāh Abdālī took place before the palace revolution above referred to. Abdālī now returned to retrieve his fortune. Mir Mannu or Muinu-l Mulk, son of the *wazir*

Kamru-d dīn Khān, who had distinguished himself in the first fight against Abdālī, was then the *subahdār* of Lahore. He had proved himself a capable governor, but unfortunately he received no support from Delhi. 'Ahmad Khān's (Abdālī's) forces, separating in all directions, laid waste the villages and fields on every side, till they arrived in the neighbourhood of Lahore, destroying all the country in its proximity. . . . The news of Ahmad Khān's attack speedily reached the ears of the Emperor and the *wazīr*, but no one thought of sending troops to assist Muinu-l Mulk,' says the *Tarikh-i Ahmad Shāhi*; on the contrary, the *wazīr* was not a little pleased to hear of his embarrassment. At last news arrived that Muinu-l Mulk had, according to the advice and instructions of the Emperor, ceded to Ahmad Afghān the four *mahāls* of Lahore viz., Sialkot, Imānābad, Parsarur, and Aurangābad, which had formerly belonged to the ruler of Kabul. Nāsir Khān was appointed to manage the four *mahāls* and send the yearly revenue to Kabul. Ahmad Khān, being perfectly satisfied with this arrangement, quitted the Punjab for Kabul, and Muinu-l Mulk returned to Lahore.

But Mīr Mannu would not continue to yield the tribute which had been exacted from him under duress. This brought the Durrāni on him for a second time in 1750-51. 'Ahmad came by forced marches to Lahore, and began to devastate the country (again). . . . Mīr Mannu marched back in alarm to the city, barricaded all the streets, and strengthened the interior defences. But the Emperor, under the direction of his Irāni *wazīr* (Safdar Jang), did worse than nothing. 'The nobles and *mirzas* of Delhi hoped that Mīr Mannu (who was a Turāni) might be destroyed, and after this desirable event they would take measures against Abdālī (!). They would thus extirpate the thorn which the *Turānis* had planted in their side. Pursuing this suicidal policy, a rival had been appointed governor of Multan who was promised the *subahdārī* of Lahore if he should succeed in getting rid of Muinu-l Mulk. Under these circumstances even the lion-hearted Mannu could do little. He was defeated and obliged 'to kiss the threshold of the Durrāni.' Lahore and Multan were ceded to Abdālī with the Emperor's promise of an annual tribute of 50 *lakhs* of rupees.

*Marathas in the Punjab* : A complication soon arose out of an agreement between the *wazīr* Safdar Jang and the Marathas. The latter since the time of Bāji Rao I had become by far the most conspi-

cuous power to reckon with in North India. Whether it was the threat of an invasion of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa by the Bhonsle of Nāgpur (who was a rival of the Peshwas), or a conflict between the Rohillas and the Nawāb of Oudh, or an internal dispute about succession in Rajputāna, or again the fear of a Durrāni invasion in the Punjab, it was the Peshwa and his Maratha confederates that were looked up to as saviours. Thus the *Peshwāi* Marathas were called into Bengal by Ali Verdi Khān in 1734 to save his province from the *Nāgpuri* Marathas. This resulted in the annual grant, by the Emperor Muhammad Shāh to Rāja Shāhu, of 25 *lakhs* of rupees as the *chauth* of Bengal and 10 *lakhs* as that of Bihar, promised in November 1746. In 1751 likewise, Safdar Jang, the *wazir*, finding himself unequal to the task of suppressing the Bangash and Rohilla Afghans, who had become a menace both to the Empire and to his own *subah* of Bihar, summoned the Marathas to his assistance. This alliance, originally effected to meet a local problem, soon ripened into what appeared to be a more formidable coalition between the Marathas and the Empire as represented by the *wazir*. The treaty embodying this was made during the third Abdāli invasion of the Punjab (1751-52). Its terms were as follows :—

1. The Peshwa agreed to protect the dwindling Empire from all its enemies, whether foreign invaders like Abdāli or domestic rebels like the Jāts, Rohillas, or the Sikhs.
2. Fifty *lakhs* of rupees were to be paid to the Peshwa for this : 30 *lakhs* for driving out Abdāli and the rest for other services.
3. In addition the Peshwa was granted the *chauth* of the Punjab and Sind including the *mahāls* of Sialkot, Parsarur, Gujarat, Aurangābad, and the districts of Hisār, Sāmbhal, Murādābad and Badāun.
4. The Peshwa was also to be appointed Governor of Ajmer (including the *faujdāri* of Narnaul) and Agra (including the *faujdāri* of Mathura).
5. The above charges were to be administered strictly according to the laws of the Mughal Empire and nominally subject to the Emperor.
6. And finally, the Maratha *sardārs* were to be enlisted in the ranks of the Imperial *mansabdārs*.

This, as Sir Jadunath Sarkar points out, practically placed the Marathas "in possession of the north-western frontier province, though under the Emperor's suzerainty, so that it would be their interest to resist Abdāli, and the Emperor would be relieved of the task of defending it . . . . Safdar Jang even talked of reconquering Kabul with Maratha help." Although the scheme did not materialise immediately,

it sufficiently indicated the importance of the Marathas and fixed their gaze upon the province of their doom.

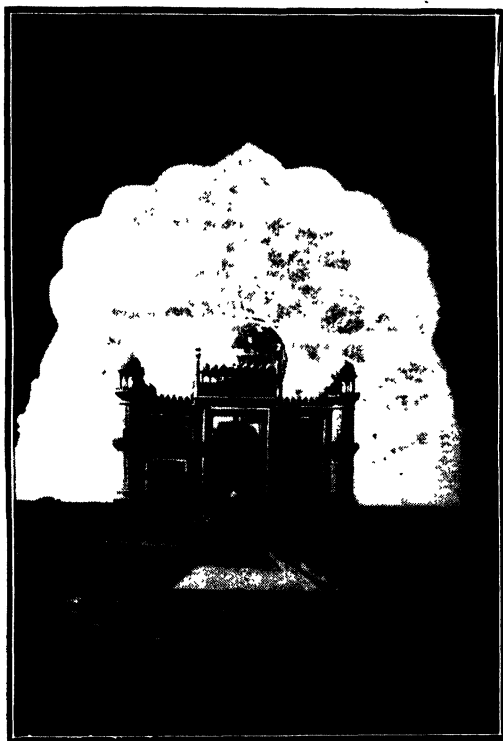
The obstacle in the way of their realisation was the existence of a party at Court opposed to the Irāni *wazīr* Safdar Jang, during whose absence from Delhi, was precipitated the agreement with Abdālī already referred to above. By this the Punjab had already been yielded up to the Durrāni (1751-52). Under these circumstances, Safdar Jang's inability to fulfil his agreement with the Marathas brought matters to a head at Delhi. The eunuch Jāvid Khān, the dictator at Court, was naturally held responsible by the *wazīr*. Failing all other remedies Safdar Jang determined upon and effected his murder on 27 August, 1752. This political assassination and the domination of the *wazīr* over the Emperor and his Court only made the position worse for Safdar Jang; it increased the number of his enemies. To strengthen himself, Safdar Jang quartered his Maratha allies round about Delhi, and the two together established a tyranny that became increasingly intolerable to all. "The Emperor (Ahmad Shāh) keenly resented being reduced to the condition of a captive cut off from free intercourse with society by Safdar Jang's partisans. Such high-handedness on the part of the prime minister could have been borne if his administration had been a success, the revenue secured, and the enemy kept out. But a dictator under whom the capital was insulted by a permanent camp of Marathas at its gates, the provinces passed out of the Central Government's control, and the royal house-hold officials and troops all starved, was sure to provoke a universal revolt against his unwholesome domination."

From the close of 1752 there were persistent reports of a fresh Durrāni incursion. On 5 February 1753, an envoy from Ahmad Shāh Abdālī actually presented himself at the Court of the Mughal Emperor demanding the 50 *lakhs* promised to him in 1751-52. The baffled Emperor consulted his courtiers who only taunted: "The Marathas have undertaken to fight Abdālī. You have given them the two provinces of Agra and Ajmer, and the *chauth* of all the 24 *subahs*. You have paid them money and placed all authority in their hands. Ask *them* what should be done now."

This precipitated a crisis at Court. The party in opposition to Safdar Jang cried for his dismissal. A civil war ensued in the course of which the Jāts as the allies of the *wazīr* plundered Old Delhi: ' *lakhs* and *lakhs* were looted, the houses were demolished, and all the suburbs and Churania and Wakilpura were rendered totally lampless. The capital and its suburbs, when the Afghan was knocking at their gates were turned into a Field of Mars, not for fighting against the external enemy, but on account of the internal quarrels between the Emperor and his insubordinate officers. At last peace was restored through the mediation of Mādhō Singh, the Rājā of Jaipur, to whom the helpless Emperor appealed in the hour of distress. The mediator was rewarded with the restoration of Rantambhor which the

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SHARMA: *Crescent in India*



Tomb of Safdar Jang

Rajput had begged for in vain from Muhammad Shāh. Safdar Jang, dismissed from his office as *wazir*, retired to his *subah* of Oudh where he died on 5 October, 1754.

"This final withdrawal of Safdar Jang from the capital," observes Sarkar, "completed the process by which the ablest and most experienced of the elder peers, who could possibly have reformed the administration if properly supported by the Emperor, gave up the task in despair and retired to some distant province where they could at least achieve something really great and good, though in a smaller sphere. The practical independence of these provincial governors in Bengal, Oudh, and the Deccan, and their scornful unconcern with the affairs of Delhi, coupled with the Maratha seizure of Gujarat and Mālwa, and the Afghan annexation of the Punjab, contracted the Empire of India into a small area round Delhi and a few districts of the modern U. P., where small men only fought and intrigued for small personal ends."

*Imādu-l Mulk's Domination* : The retirement of Safdar Jang, however, brought no peace either to the Emperor or to his capital. The parties changed, but the civil strife continued. The hero of the triumph against Safdar Jang had been Imādu-l Mulk, a grandson of Nizāmu-l Mulk. He was then the *bakhshi* or pay-master of the Imperial troops. On the dismissal of Safdar Jang, Intizāmu-d daulah, uncle of Imād and leader of the Turāni party, had become the *wazir*. Now the two, uncle and nephew, the *wazir* and the *bakhshi*, quarrelled for supremacy over the Emperor. The latter, being the more impetuous and capable, triumphed in the end over his self-indulgent rival. The Emperor had naturally sided with his *wazir*; but when his plans were foiled, the whole strife recoiled on him. Imād set aside both the Emperor and the *wazir*, and raised as stated already Azizu-d dīn, a son of Jahāndār Shāh, to the throne as Alamgīr II, and himself became the *wazir* and dictator.

In these squabbles within the Imperial arena, the Marathas had been more than mere disinterested witnesses. We have seen how their puissant arms were coveted in all places. They were not, however, wedded to any party in particular. They assisted Safdar Jang and the Emperor as it suited their ambitious policy in the North. In the civil war between Safdar Jang and the Emperor they had no hesitation in siding with the latter. In the sequel to this struggle they sided with Imādu-l Mulk. They were clever in always backing the winning horse. The revolutions at the capital, although not the fruits of their intrigues, were all carried out with their assistance. Raghunāth Rao, the Peshwa's younger brother, Malhār



Rao Holkar, and the Sindhias (Jayappa and Dattāji) were their great generals in the North. They exacted heavy tribute from all and sundry : from the Rajputs, the Jāts, and the Mughals alike, and dominated everywhere. The overthrow of Emperor Ahmad Shāh was not the last word the Marathas had to say in this tumultuous situation. They continued to be the allies of the vigorous young *wazir*, Imādu-l Mulk, the new "King-maker" of Delhi.

*Reign of Alamgīr II :* The new Emperor Alamgīr II, whose character and fate have already been described, was a mere figure-head. His overthrow and murder in 1759 was due to his own pusillanimity. Like his weak predecessors he gave no unequivocal support to his 'maker' the powerful *wazir*. The latter, following a vigorous policy, had incurred the enmity of Najibu-d daulah, the new Rohillah leader, as well as the hereditary enemy of his house, the Nawāb of Oudh, Shujāu-d daulah, who had succeeded his father Safdar Jang. In the Punjab also, Ghāziu-d dīn (Imād had assumed the title of his father), taking advantage of Muinu-l Mulk's death, had appointed a capable officer named Adina Beg in order to subdue the turbulent Sikhs and to drive out the Afghans. Ghāziu-d dīn, therefore, had made a promising beginning to bring the anarchical situation under control. If the Emperor had whole-heartedly supported him in this policy everything might have gone on well. But unfortunately for all concerned, he played into the hands of the *wazir's* enemies. The *wazir* in his desperation had recourse to the familiar stratagem of killing the *faineant* emperor and replacing him with another puppet. This was according to the *Ibrat-nāmā*, a youth named Muhiu-l Millat, son of the Muhiu-s Sunnat, son of Kām Bakhsh. He was raised to the throne as Shāh Jahār II. But he was not recognised by anybody ; for the Durrāni was once again upon the scene ; and the King-maker himself had to fly for his life. The murdered Emperor's son, Ali Gauhar, was then a fugitive in Bihar. His succession was sponsored by Najibu-d daulah, Shujāu-d daulah and Abdāli ; yet, he could not return to his capital except under the 'protection' of the Marathas in 1772.\* We repeat, therefore, although the 'emperors' continued for another century,

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\* As Sarkar has put it : 'From 10th October, 1760, when Sadāshiv Rao Bhāu deposed the *wazir's* puppet, Shāh Jahār II, and proclaimed Shāh Ālam II as Emperor in Delhi, to the 6th of January, 1772, when Shāh Ālam rode into the capital of his fathers for the first time as sovereign, the imperial city was widowed of her lord.'

the Mughal Empire ceased to exist with the political 'vacuum' created at Delhi in 1759, and the occupation and destruction of the capital by rival forces of the Durrānis and the Marathas in 1760. With the subsequent slaughter of the Marathas on the fateful and fatal field of Pānipat in the early months of 1761 the Empire had hardly anything to do : for the very simple reason that it had already ceased to be.

*Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose.*

*And Jamshyd's Seven-ringed Cup, where no one knows ;*

.....

*One Moment in Annihilation's waste,*

*One Moment in the Well of Life to taste—*

*The Stars are setting and the Caravan*

*Starts for the Dawn of Nothing—Oh, make haste !*

#### PĀNIPAT AND AFTER :

We cannot, however, close this denouement of the Imperial drama without alluding to the tragic circumstances surrounding the chief actors when the curtain dropped for the last time. The main fact of the situation was that the friends of Empire had turned its enemies and its enemies friends : Abdāli and the Marathas had interchanged their places in relation to the Emperor ; similarly the *wazir* and the Rohillas. This 'reversal of alliances' (1757-59) is not less interesting than the 'diplomatic revolution' (1748-56) in the European history of about the same period. Like France and England changing sides in respect of Austria, we find that Abdāli and the Marathas exchange places in respect of the Emperor. In the case of the latter, however, the turn of the tide was brought about, not so much by diplomacy, but by sheer force of events. These must be clearly traced in order to view the third battle of Pānipat in its proper perspective from the point of view of the Mughal Empire.

The history of the first three invasions of Abdāli has made it plain that the invader was considered an enemy of the Empire. The efforts made by the Emperor and his *wazir* to win the support of the Marathas also made it clear that the latter were considered the best friends and defenders of the Empire. The Emperor Alamgīr owed his position to the *wazir* Imādu-l Mulk, Gāziu-d dīn Fīrūz Jang and his Maratha allies. This relationship continued from the accession of Alamgīr II in 1754 to the fourth invasion of the Durrāni in the

year of the battle of Plassey (1757). The years following, up to the battle of Pānipat (1761), were momentous years in the history of India. Dr. V. A. Smith has pointed out how "during the short space of time which intervened between June 1756 and the tragedy of Pānipat in January 1761 a marvellous change was wrought in the English position both in Bengal and in the peninsula. The conflicts in the south between the English and the French, in which each side was supported by Indian allies, began in 1746 with loss of Madras and ended on January 6, 1761, a week before the battle of Pānipat with the conditional surrender to British arms of Pondicherry, the chief French settlement. The events in Bengal were still more startling and fateful. The traders who fled in terror to Fulta in June 1756 were the masters of a rich kingdom exactly twelve months later."

It is hazardous to assert what might have happened to the destiny of India had the contrary happened on the field of Pānipat. But the fact that India did not present a united front to the Durrāni needs to be well borne in mind. Although in his earlier raids Abdāli had been encouraged by invitations from rebellious Indian *amirs*, the disunity of India was not pressed to a fatal point until during the 4th and the 5th invasions of Abdāli. These two last raids of Ahmad Shāh took place during the fateful period 1757-59, and under the following circumstances :—

The zealous efforts of the *wazir*, Gāziū-d din, to bring matters under his control have already been referred to. 'Imādu-l Mulk, after arranging the revenue and other matters,' says the *Ibrat-nāmā*, 'set about the reformation of the cavalry and the *sin dagh* system, which had fallen into a very corrupt state. He removed the Emperor from Shāh-Jahānābad to Pānipat, and then taking away from the officials of the cavalry the lands which they held round the capital, he appointed his own officers to manage them. The chiefs of the cavalry, *being encouraged by the Emperor and some of his councillors*, were clamorous against the *wazir*, and sent their *wakils* to him to demand their pay.' These demands were followed up by soldiers who 'went to the pavilion of the *wazir*, and, collecting there in a mob, raised a great tumult. The *wazir* heard this, and, proud of his rank and power, came fearlessly out to quell the disturbance. The rioters seized him, and began to abuse him in terms unmentionable. Numbers gathered together from every side, and the mob increased. They tore off his (*wazir's*) clothes, and in the struggle his turban even fell from his head. Then they dragged him through the streets of Pānipat to their camp.... Meanwhile a message was brought from the Emperor (Alamgir II) to the officers, offering to make himself responsible for their pay if

*they would deliver over the wazir to him as a prisoner, and telling them that if he escaped from their hands, they would have hard work to get their pay from him. . . . Imādu-l Mulk was much hurt and troubled by the part the Emperor had taken. In a few days they returned to Delhi, and he, leaving the Emperor under the watch of his confidants, proceeded to Lahore.' At Lahore, with the help of Adina Beg, an adventurer, he took possession of the late subahdār Muinu-l Mulk's family and belongings and 'gave the province of Lahore to Adina Beg Khān for a tribute of thirty lacs of rupees. . . . The widow (of Muinu-l Mulk), hurt by the treatment she had received, let loose her tongue, and in a loud voice reviled and abused the wazir. She added, "This conduct of yours will bring distress upon the realm, destruction to Shāh-Jahānābad, and disgrace to the nobles and the State. . . . Ahmad Shāh Durrāni will soon avenge this disgraceful act and punish you."*

Ahmad Shāh, on hearing of this daring act of Imādu-l Mulk, came hastily to Lahore. Adina Beg Khān, being unable to resist, fled towards Hānsi and Hissār. 'Imādu-l Mulk was frightened. . . . When Ahmad Shāh drew near to Delhi, Imādu-l Mulk had no resource but submission, . . . . With all the marks of contrition he went forth to meet the Shāh, and. . . he was confirmed in his rank and office, upon condition of paying a heavy tribute. On 28 January, 1757, he entered the fortress of Shāh Jahānābad, and had an interview with the Emperor Alamgīr. He remained in the city nearly a month, plundering the inhabitants, and very few people escaped being pillaged.'

*The Tarikh-i Ibrāhīm Khān* adds other details of Abdāli's 4th invasion. It says that the Shāh married a daughter of the Emperor's brother to his own son Timūr Shāh. He also marched against Sūraj Mal Jāt. 'After causing a general massacre of the garrison, he hastened towards Mathura, and having razed that ancient sanctuary of the Hindus to the ground, made all the idolators fall a prey to his relentless sword. At this time a dreadful pestilence broke out with great virulence in the Shāh's army, so that he was forced to abandon his intention of chastising Sūraj Mal, and unwillingly made up his mind to repair to his own kingdom.'

*Internal Conflicts* : The attempt to collect from Oudh the amount of tribute due to Abdāli brought the wazir into conflict with Shujāu-d daula. At the same time, 'Imādu-l Mulk, who was very apprehensive of Najibu-d daula (the Rohilla chief), excited Dattāji Sindhia and Jānkuji Mahratta to hostilities against him, and promised them several lacs of rupees, on condition of their expelling him from the country which he occupied. The Mahratta chiefs accordingly, at the head of their southern armies, attacked Najibu-d daula

with impetuosity, and he, as long as he was able, maintained his ground against that force, which was as numerous as ants and locusts, till at last, being unable to hold out longer, he took refuge in the fort of Sakartal. The southerners laid siege to the fort, and having stopped the supplies of grain, put him to great distress. Sindhia, seeing Najibu-d daula reduced to extremities, sent for Imādu-l Mulk from Shāh-Jahānābad, in order to complete the measures for chastising him.' In the meanwhile, 'Imādu-l Mulk, suspicious of the Emperor, and knowing that Intizāmu-d daula Khān-khānan was his chief adviser, murdered that noble in the very act of saying his prayers.' Likewise was the Emperor also murdered, and his body thrown out of the window, 'stripped of all the clothes,' and the corpse left stark naked. 'After lying on the ground for eighteen hours, the body was taken up by order of Mahdi Āli Khān, and buried in the sepulchre of the Emperor Humāyun.' Immediately a new puppet (Shāh Jahān III?) was raised to the throne, and Imād marched against Sakartal. 'In the meantime,' says the *Ibrat-nāmā*, from which the above narrative has been abstracted, 'the report of Ahmad Shāh Durrāni's invasion spread among the people. Imādu-l Mulk, in fear of his life, saw no other means of safety than in seeking the protection of Sūraj Mal (Jāt), and accordingly departed without delay for that chief's territory.' With his flight his puppet 'Emperor' lost his only champion, and when the next year Sadāshiv Rao Bhāu occupied Delhi, on 9th October, 1760, he 'removed Shāh Jahān' and 'seated the illustrious Prince, Mīrza Jawan Bakht, the grandson of Alamgīr II, on the throne of Delhi.' But since Sadāshiv Rao died on the field of Pānipat, in the course of a few months, this Prince also was left without a champion. This brings us to the last scene of the last act.

We have anticipated a little in speaking of Bhāu's occupation of Delhi and his subsequent fate. That was the outcome of the conflict between the Marathas and Abdāli rendered inevitable by the entry of both into the Punjab. To understand this situation we have to turn to events following upon Abdāli's fourth invasion.

In the words of the *Tarikh-i Ibrāhim Khān*, 'The Shāh, after forming a matrimonial alliance with the daughter of his late Majesty Muhammad Shāh, and investing Najibu-d daula with the title of *Amīru-l umra* and the dignified post of *bakhshi*, set out for Lahore. As soon as he had planted his sublime standard on that spot, he conferred both the government of Lahore and Multan on his son, Timūr Shāh, and leaving Jahān Khān behind

him, proceeded himself to Kandahār.' Although Adina Beg was placed in charge of the Doab under the new regime, he soon found himself in conflict with his new masters. On account of this, Adina Beg allied himself with the Sikhs and the Marathas, the latter of whom had already come to the rescue of Imādu-l Mulk against Najibu-d daula. Accordingly 'Raghunāth Rao and the rest of the Mahratta chiefs set out from Delhi towards Lahore, at the solicitation of Adina Beg Khān, of whom mention has been briefly made above. After leaving the suburbs of Delhi, they arrived first at Sirhind, where they fought an action with Abdūs Samad Khān, who had been installed in that place by the Abdāli Shāh, and took him prisoner. Turning away from thence, they pushed on to Lahore and got ready for a conflict with Jahān Khān, who was stationed there. The latter, however, being alarmed at the paucity of his troops in comparison with the multitude of the enemy, resolved at once to seek refuge in flight. Accordingly, in the month of Sha'ban, 1171 A. H. (April, 1758), he pursued the road to Kabul with the utmost speed, accompanied by Timūr Shāh, and made a present to the enemy of the heavy baggage and property that he had accumulated during his administration in that region. The Mahratta chieftains followed in pursuit of Timūr Shāh as far as the river Attok, and then retraced their steps to Lahore. *This time the Mahrattas extended their sway up to Multan.* As the rainy season had commenced, they delivered over the province of Lahore to Adina Beg Khān, on his promising to pay a tributary offering of seventy-five *lacs* of rupees; and made up their minds to return to the Dakhin, being anxious to behold again their beloved families at home.

'On reaching Delhi in the course of their return, they made straight for their destination, after leaving one of their warlike chieftains, named Jānku, at the head of a formidable army in the vicinity of the metropolis. It chanced that in the year 1172 A. H. (1758-9 A. D.) Adina Beg Khān passed away; whereupon Jānkuji entrusted the government of the province of Lahore to a Mahratta, called Sama, whom he despatched thither. He also appointed Sadik Beg Khān, one of Adina Beg Khān's followers, to the administration of Sirhind, and gave the management of the Doab to Adina Beg Khān's widow. Sama, after reaching Lahore, applied himself to the task of government, and pushed on his troops as far as the river Attok. In the meanwhile, Imādu-l Mulk, the *wazir*, caused Shāh Alamgir II to suffer martyrdom... On the other side, Dattāji Sindhia, invaded Rohilla territory which made Najibu-d daula write numerous letters to the Abdāli to induce him to come to Hindustan. The Shāh who was vexed at heart on account of Timūr Shāh and Jahān Khān having been compelled to take to flight, and was brooding over plans of revenge, accounted this friendly overture a signal advantage, and set himself at once in motion.'

The story of the struggle which ensued out of the situation so far described does not form part of the history of the Mughal Empire. As Mr. Sardesai has pointed out, "it became a point of honour with both powers (the Marathas and Abdāli), the one to keep what was

once conquered, the other to reclaim what was lost." Only a few facts connected with this struggle are relevant to our study, and they are as follows :—

1. Ahmad Shāh Durrāni having killed Dattāji Sindhia and put to flight Malhār Rao Holkar at last reached the capital, Delhi, and took up his quarters in the city.

2. On the return of Raghunāth Rao to Poona from the North, in 1759, a more formidable army was immediately despatched by the Peshwa Bālāji Bāji Rao, under the command of his son Vishwās Rao and cousin Sadāshiv Rao Bhāu to drive away the Durrāni : " You must destroy the enemy finally, and hold all the territory up to the Indus." This was the mission on which they were sent.

3. They reached Delhi on 23 September 1760, and invested its fort which was then in the charge of Yakub Ali Khān, a brother of Ahmad Shāh Durrāni's prime minister Shāh Wali Khān. After a strenuous siege and defence the fort fell into the hands of the Marathas. ' Bhāu, entered the fort along with Vishwās Rao, and took possession of the property and goods that he could find in the old repositories of the royal family. He also broke in pieces the silver ceiling of the *Diwān-i-Khās*, from which he extracted so much of the precious metal as to be able to coin seventeen *lacs* of rupees out of it. Nārād Shankar Brāhmaṇ was then appointed by Bhāu to the post of governor of the fort.

4. Najibu-d daula (Rohilla), already an ally of Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, now tried to win over Shujāu-d daula to his side. Najib went in person ' with a conciliatory epistle, which was as it were a treaty of friendship.' Shujāu-d daula ultimately came into the net.

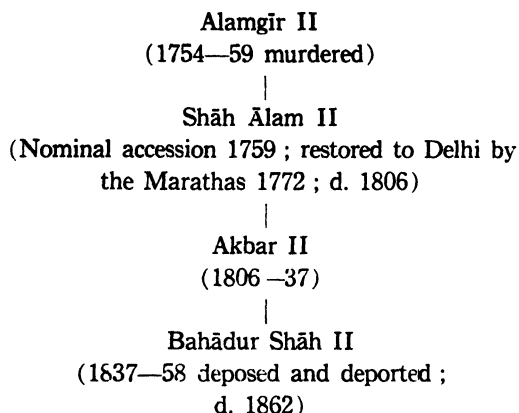
5. Sadāshiv Rao, ' on the 29th of the month of Safar, 1174 A. H. (9 October, 1760 A. D.), removed Shāh Jahān, son of Muhi'u-s Sunnat, son of Kām Bakhsh, son of Aurangzeb Alamgīr, and having seated the illustrious Prince, Mirza Jawan Bakht, the grandson of Alamgīr II, on the throne of Delhi, publicly conferred the dignity of *wazīr* on Shujāu-d daula.

This is the last we hear of the Emperor at Delhi. The gods declared against the Marathas in the wager of battle at Pānipat, and consequently the ' Emperor ' placed on the throne of Delhi by Bhāu in 1760 disappeared with him. The victor, too, was not destined to rule from Delhi. He declared that he came to Hindustan ' at the solicitation of his countrymen, the Rohillas, and other Musalmans, to relieve them from their fear of the Mahratta yoke.'

#### LAST OF THE MUGHALS :

Nothing more remains to be said about the Mughal Empire excepting the fate of the last descendants of Bābur and their shadowy ' power.' The following, ' Mughal Emperors' were *virtual prisoners*,

at first of the Marathas and then of the British, until the very last of them, Bahādur Shāh II, was formally *deposed* and deported in 1858 :—



The only omissions in this are the two Princes raised to the throne of Delhi respectively by the rebellious *wazir* Imādu-l Mulk and Sadāshiv Rao Bhāu, during the revolution created by the last invasion of Ahmad Shāh Abdālī (1759—60). The first of these, Shāh Jahān III, was displaced by Mirza Jawan Bakht (grandson of Alamgīr II) ; the latter (Mirza Jawan Bakht) continued to act as his father's representative during the 12 years' exile of Shāh Ālam from Delhi. But the fact that after Pānipat, in 1761, Abdālī recognised Shāh Ālam II as Emperor, eclipsed both these nominees.

The sequel may be very briefly alluded to. In 1765, after the English victory over the Nawāb Wazir at Buxār in the previous year, Shāh Ālam received from the English the districts of Kora and Allahābad with an agreement to pay him 26 *lakhs* of rupees a year out of the revenue of Bengal, in return for which he issued a grant to the English, of the *diwāni* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The 'Emperor' thereafter lived under British protection until he chose to go over to the Marathas who, under Mahadji Sindhia, restored him to his throne and palace at Delhi in 1772. Thereupon Shāh Ālam forfeited Kora and Allahābad, which were given to the Nawāb Wazir, and also the 26 *lakhs* promised by the English.

In 1788 this scion of Bābur was brutally blinded and subjected



to unspeakable horrors in his own palace by an Afghan ruffian named Ghulām Kādir. The *Ibrat-nāmā* gives harrowing details of the havoc wrought by this fiendish rogue, which only serve to illustrate that the 'Emperor' was not now master even of his own palace and person. He was dethroned, beaten, imprisoned, blinded, robbed ; his sons were similarly manhandled and made to dance and sing before the tyrant ; the ladies of his household were outraged in the most heinous fashion imaginable ; and finally, the monster called for a painter, and said, "Paint my likeness at once, sitting, knife in hand, upon the breast of Shāh Ālam, digging out his eyes !"

When a descendant of Bābur and Akbar had fallen into such low and miserable impotency, little need be said about his last two successors. Although the East India Company had refused to pay Shāh Ālam the 26 *lakhs* of rupees promised to him in return for the *diwāni*, they continued to respect his authority as Emperor for all formal purposes : "The seal of the governor-general purported to be that of a servant of the Mughal. The coinage was still struck in Shāh Ālam's name. In international discussions the English did not claim sovereignty except in Calcutta and the surrounding region, posing elsewhere as the influential adviser of the nawāb who reigned, but did not rule, at Murshidābad." But the times were changing very fast indeed.

"Cornwallis was the first governor-general (1786) to object to the empty formulas in which the company's government was accustomed to protest obedience in his letters to the emperor. Wellesley, who indeed projected the establishment of British predominance in India, carried matters much further. By Lord Lake's victory at Delhi (1803, over Daulat Rao Sindhia), the person of the Emperor passed into the custody of the East India Company. By the arrangements which Wellesley then made, the administration of Delhi was to be conducted in the imperial name, but the only spot in which the imperial orders were really effective was the palace and its precincts.....Lord Moira, who arrived as governor-general in 1813, brought out with him a fixed determination to make an end of 'the fiction of the Moghul government.' The phrase denoting 'the imperial supremacy' was removed from his seal. No more ceremonial gifts were offered to the Emperor, Akbar II, Shāh Ālam's son, unless he waived all authority over the company's possessions,..... in 1827 the Emperor consented to meet Moira's successor, Amherst, on equal terms.....In 1831 the coinage of Bengal ceased to be struck in the name of the dead Emperor, Shāh Ālam, whose titles had continued to appear on the company's rupees till that year. Then it was resolved to induce the imperial family to remove from the old palace at Delhi to a new residence which was to be built for it near the Kutb Minār and at last

Canning decided no longer to recognise the imperial title after the demise of the existing emperor, Bahādur Shāh. Immediately after this the Mutiny broke out. After the fall of Delhi, the emperor was placed on his trial for complicity in the murders which had taken place at Delhi and, more doubtfully, for rebellion against the East India Company. He was declared deposed; he passed the rest of his days as state-prisoner at Rangoon, and the British government became both in form and in substance supreme as well as sovereign in India." (*The Cambridge Shorter History of India.*)

## SOME RELEVANT DATES

A. D.

- 1740 Death of Bāji Rao. Ali Verdi Khān usurps Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Accession of Frederick the Great in Prussia and Maria Theresa in Austria.
- 1744 War between England and France; repercussions in India.
- 1747 Nādir Shāh assassinated in Afghanistan.
- 1748 Death of Muhammad Shāh, Nizāmu-l Mulk. Accession of Ahmad Shāh (1748-54). Invasions of Abdāli. (1748-61). Death of Rāja Shāhu.
- 1751 Ali Verdi Khān yields Cuttack to the Marathas and promises *chauth* for Bengal. Safdar Jang seeks Maratha assistance against the Rohillas in Oudh. Siege of Arcot by Clive.
- 1753 Sirāju-d daula succeeds Ali Verdi Khān. Death of Rāghuji Bhonsla.
- 1754 Ahmad Shāh deposed by Ghāziu-d dīn and Malhār Rao Holkar: Alamgīr II raised to the throne (1754-59).
- 1756 Zenith of Marātha power; Rāghobā in the Punjab. The seven years war in Europe begins. Black Hole tragedy.
- 1757 Battle of Plassey.
- 1759 Mughal Empire virtually comes to a clear close with the murder of Alamgīr II. Ahmad Shāh Abdāli at Delhi. Wolfe takes Quebec.
- 1760 George III in England.
- 1761 Third battle of Pānīpat. French power in India extinguished.
- 1764 Battle of Buxār.
- 1771 Shāh Ālam II restored to Delhi by the Marathas (d. 1806).
- 1806-37 Akbar II.
- 1837-58 Bahādur Shāh II deposed and deported in 1858 (d. 1862).

## CHAPTER XX

### REVIEW OF THE EMPIRE

Mughal history is not without its lessons, its inspirations and its warnings. An attempt will be made in this concluding survey to review the Imperial venture as a whole, with a view to assess its achievements no less than its failures. The roots of the present are imbedded in the past, and the glory as well as the mortification of so recent a past as that we have studied should influence our destiny as a nation, for good and for evil. "History," said Goethe, "must from time to time be re-written, not because new facts have been discovered, but because new aspects come into view, because the participant in the progress of an age is led to standpoints from which the past can be regarded and judged in a novel manner."

The Indian Mughals, were the fulfilment of the best and the worst instincts of their forbears. By a prophetic instinct the followers of Timūr as well as Bābur had felt that settlement in India would mean deterioration of their character as warriors and conquerors. Their worst fears were fulfilled, though gradually and imperceptibly, in the course of over two centuries. This may not be attributed entirely to the enervating influence of the Indian climate : the Indian part of the modern army has proved its efficiency under all tests. The deterioration of the Mughals must therefore be attributed to other causes. But before we proceed to analyse these, we might refer to another dubious factor, viz., the racial intermixture of Mughal with Hindustāni and Persian blood. The reader will remember that the mothers of most of the Mughal Princes, Jahāngīr onwards, belonged to one or other of these two races. But neither the Persians nor the Rajputs or other Hindustānis who supplied the stalks on which the Indian Mughals were bred were wanting in martial qualities or traditions. There is no reason why any intermixture of them should have proved destructive to those qualities. On the contrary there is ample evidence to believe that, with a few exceptions among the later Mughals, all the descendants of Bābur kept up their physical stamina and courage remarkably well, in the midst of the most distressing

circumstances. There were instances, no doubt, of Mughal Princes who died of consumption and other wasting diseases ; but these exceptions were due to their own personal dissipations and not the result of the deterioration of the stalk from which they sprang.

What has been said of the Imperial house may not have been equally true of the rank and file. There must have been comparatively greater deterioration among lesser men of the ruling race. But even here it is necessary to remember that the larger part of the Imperial army, after Bābur and Humāyun, consisted not of the Mughals but other Musalmans and Hindustānis. There were only a few divisions of Mughals as such, in the army, though among the nobility the Mughal or Turāni party continued to exercise power in the Empire for quite a long time. These nobles were undoubtedly demoralised on account of a variety of circumstances, but their deterioration need not necessarily have proved fatal to the Mughal Empire.

#### CAUSES OF DOWNFALL :

If the complex disease with which the Imperial structure was stricken in its later days is to be indicated by two of its most outstanding symptoms, we might say that its prostration was brought about by LUXURY and INTESTINAL FEUDS :

‘ Where wealth accumulates men decay ; ’  
And disloyalty on the Empire did prey.

The decadence of the Emperors and the nobility under the deadly effects of these two poisons may be illustrated by a few examples. Jahāndar Shāh and Ahmad Shāh may be cited as the worst specimens of the descendants of the hardy and noble warriors, Bābur and Akbar. Despite the luxury and pomp of the prosperous reigns of Akbar, Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān, the Mughal Emperors had to a large extent succeeded in maintaining their personal *vim* by means of military campaigns and hunting expeditions. Bahādur Shāh I, son and successor of Aurangzeb, was noted for his craze for outdoor life. He never felt at ease under any roof. Even Farrukh-siyar was a fine specimen of the Mughal physique. Kām Bakhsh as a captive on his death-bed regretted that a descendant of Timūr was captured alive. But Jahāndar Shāh and Ahmad Shāh were not ashamed to be caught in the tresses of their concubines who came between them and their duties as Emperors.

They looked on beauty  
And turned away from duty.

The former fooled himself in public with his Lāl Kunwar ; the latter buried himself in his seraglio—which extended over four miles square—for weeks together without seeing the face of a male. When gold rusts what will iron do ? The *amirs* were only in a worse condition. With a few honourable exceptions like Nizāmu-l Mulk, even where they were not wanting in personal bravery, they too were spoilt by luxury, personal ambition, envy of fellow-nobles, and above all by their want of loyalty either to the Empire or to the Emperor. We have seen how the strength and fortunes of the Empire varied with the strength of the Emperor's personal character. The Emperor, in fact, was the keystone of the arch ; the army and the treasury constituted the cement that held the whole structure together. The nobles were the flag-stones. The Empire indeed fell on evil days when corruption set in all these elements. Foreign invaders like Nādir Shāh and Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, on the one hand, and internal parasites of all descriptions sucked the Imperial treasury dry ; the army lost its cohesion, discipline and loyalty, being composed more and more of mere mercenaries. " In short," as Irvine has pointed out, " excepting want of personal courage, every other fault in the list of military vices may be attributed to the degenerate Moghuls : indiscipline, want of cohesion, luxurious habits, inactivity, bad commissariat, and cumbersome equipment." Or, indeed, as another writer has described, " The heroic soldiers of the early Empire, and their not less heroic wives had given place to a vicious delicate breed of grandees. The ancestors of Aurangzeb who swooped down on India from the north were ruddy men in boots : the courtiers among whom Aurangzeb grew up were pale persons in petticoats. Bābur, the founder of the Empire, had swum every river which he met with during thirty years' campaigning ; the luxurious nobles around the youthful Aurangzeb wore skirts made of innumerable folds of the finest white muslin and went to war in palanquins."\* Riding on richly caparisoned horses with bells, chains and ornaments of precious gems and metals, they were more admirably fitted to prance in a peaceful procession than capable of long exertion in protracted warfare. Each nobleman endeavoured to vie with his mas-

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\* " The hardy troops of Balkh had grown soft in the Capua of the Jamna, and their religious convictions had gone the way of the Deputy of Achaie . . . . . The rough breath of their highland birth-place was changed to sickly essences ; . . . and immorality and debauchery had followed close upon the loosening of the religious bond."—Lane-Poole, *Aurangzeb*, pp. 18-19.

ter in magnificence, and even private soldiers attended to comfort in their tents, 'and the line of march presented a long train of elephants, camels, carts, and oxen, mixed up with a crowd of camp-followers, women of all ranks, merchants, shopkeepers, servants, cooks, and all kinds of ministers of luxury, amounting to ten times the number of the fighting men.'

This effeminacy of the nobility and army was rendered worse by their internal feuds and jealousies fostered by rival claimants to the throne in the Mughal ruling house itself. When Princes of the Royal blood fought among themselves casting all principles of humanity and decency to the winds, for *takht ya takhta* (crown or the coffin), the nobles were compelled to take sides and often act hypocritically and to gain only selfish personal ends. This tendency of rebellion and disloyalty is seen from the very beginning : Kāmrān, Hindāl and Askeri, under Humayūn ; Mirza Muhammad and Salim, under Akbar ; Prince Khusru, under Jahāngīr ; Aurangzeb, Dārā, Shujā and Murād, under Shāh Jahān ; Princes Muhammad Muazzam and Akbar, under Aurangzeb ; Āzam and Kām Bakhsh, under Bahādur Shāh ; and so on, the tale of treason and fratricidal strife is carried on to the very end to the utter destruction of the noble house of Bābur and Akbar. No wonder that "King-makers," abortive or successful, arose under each reign : Āli Khalifā under Bābur and Humāyun ; Bairām Khān, under Humāyun and Akbar ; Mān Singh, under Akbar and Jahāngīr ; Mahābat Khān, under Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān ; Mir Jumla, under Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb ; Munim Khān, under Bahādur Shāh. These had their hey-day under the Later Mughals : The Saiyid Brothers, Safdar Jang and Imādu-d Daula are all familiar to the reader. Last but not the least, the Marathas and the English should be remembered for their rôle, if not of 'making' kings, of 'unmaking' them. Indeed, when Nādir Shāh invaded, he not merely despoiled the capital of its wealth, but also robbed the crown of its prestige. In other words, Nādir Shāh saw the Empire already at its *nadīr*. Abdālī and the Marathas only flogged a dead horse and tried either to kill or prop up a creature that was already dead.

#### THE EMPIRE AND THE AFGHANS :

Bābur founded the Mughal Empire in 1526 by overthrowing the

Lodies who were Afghans. In the following years, besides the Rajputs, he had to fight Afghan chiefs in Jaunpur and Bihar before he could make sure that his Empire in India would endure. Still, when he died in 1530 he had not subdued important Afghan dynasties in Hindustan like those of Bengal and Gujarat. After his death the Afghans gave his son Humāyun no end of trouble. They rallied round, particularly two leaders, viz., Bahādur Shāh and Sher Shāh. The latter, as we have seen, in the course of less than ten years, drove the son of Bābur into exile. The Afghans were inspired to feel that they were in no way inferior to the Mughals; they were made to realise that they had lost their dominion in Hindustan only on account of their clannishness and want of unity; and finally they were organised to recover their lost hegemony. And although the death of Sher Shāh made this glory a shortlived triumph and enabled Humāyun to come back to his own, the real work of the Afghan adventurer endured. Akbar raised his whole administrative structure on the foundations laid by an Afghan genius. The Rajputs were assimilated into the Empire by Akbar's statesmanship, but the Afghans refused to be so absorbed. Gujarat sheltered many a rebel against the Mughal Emperor, and was not subdued until 1573, and Dāud Khān in Bengal held aloft the Afghan standard until three years later (1576).

The next five years were memorable on account of the great social and religious reforms sought to be introduced by Akbar. As we have seen, matters came to a crisis in 1581 when all the reactionary elements attempted to overthrow the régime of the reforming Emperor. The Afghans during this period of storm and stress must have aligned themselves with the enemies of Akbar, but the tempest subsided soon after. There was no trouble from the Afghans for the rest of the reign. But after the death of Akbar, on account of the frequent transfer of governors, they found an opportunity in the eastern province of Bengal. The rebellion of Usmān during this period has already been dealt with in the proper context. On 12th March 1612 the rebels were defeated finally and Usmān, the Afghan Hereward the Wake, died of a fatal wound. "The political power of the Afghans, who had been so long hostile to the Mughal rule, was completely broken, and Jahāngīr by his conciliatory policy turned them from foes into friends of the empire." As the author of the *Mukzan-i Afghana* observes: 'Nuruddīn Ghāzī (Jahāngīr) pardoning them their for-

mer trespasses, attached them to himself by the bonds of bounty ; and paid so much attention to them, that they abolished all further treasonable designs from their minds, and thought themselves bound to continue subservient and attached to him, even to the sacrifice of life.' Thereafter the Afghans merged their separate and independent existence in the fabric of the Mughal Empire and seemed to reconcile themselves to the lot of many another proud community. Soon they were favoured with the loaves and fishes of the official hierarchy and were all but absorbed like the Rajputs.

The hold of the Mughals over Kabul, from 1504 (when it was first acquired by Bābur) to 1738 (when it was captured by Nādir Shāh) gave the Empire a vantage ground for full 235 years. In it the Emperors possessed the key to the north-western gateway of India ; and it also proved an invaluable recruiting centre for an important section of the Imperial army. But, when it slipped away, on account of the bungling and impotency of Muhammad Shāh and his successors, the life-blood of the Empire oozed away. The master of Kabul appeared to be destined to dominate over the plains of the Punjab and Hindustan. As Bābur had done two centuries and a half earlier, Ahmad Shāh Abdālī made use of Kabul as a stepping stone for entry into India. That he did not attempt to found another Afghan dynasty at Delhi was one of the accidents of history. He found among the Rohillas and Bangash Afghans of Hindustan loyal supporters and allies, but still he chose to reinstate a Mughal Emperor rather than uproot the usurpers of the dominion of his race. The Afghan generals (whether Bangash, Rohilla, or Pathān) played an important rôle under the later Mughals ; and they also formed the back-bone, together with some of the Turāni nobles, of the orthodox *Sunni* party—opposed to the *Shiahs* who were mainly composed of the Hindustāni Musalmans and the Irānis or Persians. It was the Afghans that, after two centuries and a half, had their full measure of vengeance against the Mughals. It was they that invited their national hero, Durr-i durrāni, to invade India once more, and under the guise of friendship really established an Afghan dictatorship at Delhi under Najibu-d Daulah for nearly a decade after the third battle of Pānipat (1761-69). But, alas, it was the revenge of the blind Sampson. The whole Philistine structure crashed over their heads no less than over others. The Marathas and the English did not allow them to enjoy this dubious satisfaction for long.



## THE EMPIRE AND THE RAJPUTS :

Bābur's victory over Ibrāhim Lodi had placed him on the throne of Delhi ; but before he could make sure of his mastery over Hindustan, he had to subdue Rāṇa Sanga and Medini Rai, besides the fugitive Afghan chiefs scattered over North India. The strength of the Rajput resistance to the founder of the Mughal dominion is not to be minimised because of its failure. But for Bābur's advent the Rajputs had come very near recovering their hegemony over western Hindustan, at any rate, down to Gujarat and Mālwa. Bābur himself recognised the strength and valour of Rāṇa Sanga and had to put forth all the skill and effort his genius could command.

Rāṇa Sanga left no worthy successor, and Rāṇi Karṇāwati of Mewar had to appeal to Humāyun for assistance when Chitor was besieged by Bahādur Shāh of Gujarat. Yet, Sher Shāh, who succeeded in driving the Mughal out of India and re-founding Afghan dominion, confessed, at the end of his arduous Rajput campaign, that, for a handful of *bajra*, he had come very near to losing his empire in Hindustan. He could defeat the Rajputs only by having recourse to the ruse of the forged letters. It is not surprising to note that he entrusted the building of New Rohtas to Rāja Todar Mal\* who appears on the stage of history for the first time in this connexion.

Humāyun had sought refuge in vain from Rāja Maldeo of Jodhpur during his flight. Nevertheless it was the Rāṇa of Amarkot that sheltered the fugitive for a time, and Akbar seemed to carry in his blood the feelings of gratitude that his sorely tried father must have felt at that moment. Despite the ruthlessness that attended his conquest of Chitor, his policy and attitude towards the Rajputs as a whole were characterised by a broadmindedness that converted the enemy into a bulwark of the Empire. The chivalrous instincts which prompted Akbar to erect memorials to his heroic enemies, Jai Mal and Patta, could not but evoke an echo in the hearts of his more chivalrous adversaries. Rājas Bhār Mal, Bhagwān Dās, Bīrbal, Todar

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\* Rāja Todar Mal seems to have been *Khatri* by caste, and Rāja Bīrbal (referred to later in this section) a *Brāhmaṇ*. But both these have been included here under the *Rajputs*, because in *spirit* and *outlook*, as well as by *vocation*, they were indistinguishable from the Rajputs. Likewise, no distinctions of clans and sections of the Rajputs have been specified, the term being used in a very broad sense.

Mal and Mān Singh were the most loyal supporters of Akbar, who formed the pillars of his State. As the exalted position accorded to these and the dignified terms that were conceded to the Haras of Bundi (cited earlier in this book) indicated, Akbar respected the Rajputs and the Rajputs respected him. But for the strength derived from the Rajputs, both in the civil and the military departments, the Mughals would have lost much of the glory that they achieved under Akbar and his immediate successors.

Thanks to Akbar's marriage policy, his son Jahāngīr was in blood half Hindu and half Muslim. Jahāngīr in his turn, following in the footsteps of his father, left a successor, Shāh Jahān, who was racially more Hindu than Muslim. It is strange, in view of this pedigree, that Shāh Jahān should have initiated the swing of the liberal pendulum in the opposite direction. Akbar had wisely attempted to knit the social and political fabric of his Empire closely by means of inter-marriages and abolition of all racial and religious distinctions in the matter of 'Imperial preference.' Jahāngīr's reign saw no 'rift in the lute'; on the other hand, the cement was allowed to set. But in the next generation, the Muslim blood in the veins of Shāh Jahān seemed to be in conflict with his Hindu blood. This made him partially to reverse his father's and grandfather's policy, as shown by his abolition of the *sijdah* and sun-worship and more positively by his destruction of the Hindu temples at Benares. This reaction, as we have seen, reached its acme of fanatical fervour in the person of Aurangzeb, the next ruler. He could console himself that no infidel fathered or mothered him; but he too took to wife a Princess who was Rajput, by birth at any rate, and through her left a successor, Bahādur Shāh I, whose father alone could claim to be a Mughal. But even the fanatical Alamgīr, who penalised the Hindus on account of their religion, destroyed their temples and levied from them invidious contributions like the *jizya*, could not dispense with the services of great Rajput generals like Mirza Rāja Jai Singh and Rāja Jaswant Singh. Though he proved ungrateful to them in the end, much of Aurangzeb's military strength and diplomatic talent were drawn from them. Shivāji would have defied the Empire with greater nonchalance but for a Jai Singh being on its side. The greatest folly of Aurangzeb lay in alienating such great supporters. He made the vain endeavour of subjugating them by sheer brute force, and his failure indicated that the Rajput could support the Empire as well

as ruin it. Prince Akbar was won over by them and they came very near to teaching Aurangzeb the lesson he most needed.

Bahādur Shāh recovered much of the love of the Rajputs by his more conciliatory policy. He practically allowed them to enjoy their liberty in their own desert homes unmolested. The effect was seen in Ajit Singh being prepared to give his daughter in marriage to Farrukh-siyar, though after the fall of that Emperor he took her back into his home. Under the Emperors that followed, there was increasing chaos both within Rajputāna and the Mughal Empire. The corrupt generals of the latter could effect little in Rajputāna, and the Rajputs themselves sought relief at the hands of the equally, if not more, dangerous Marathas who proved their ruin. Even under such conditions, the Emperor Ahmad Shāh could get rid of a rebellious and dictatorial *wazīr*, like Safdar Jang, only by invoking the aid of the Rajput Mādhō Singh of Jaipur. The grateful Emperor placed on the Rāja's head his own jewelled turban and loaded his followers with gifts, and what was more welcome to Madho Singh, the fort of Rantambhor was restored to the Rajputs. Had Akbar's cordial relations with the Rajputs continued, without being interrupted by Aurangzeb's fatal fanaticism, perhaps it would have gone well with both. But the Todar Mals and the Jai Singhs were destined to be mere memories.

The Rajputs have been credited with more valour than wisdom. But, if they are to be judged by their contributions to the Mughal Empire, they distinguished themselves equally in both. Rāṇa Sanga's resistance to Bābur, the heroic stand of Chitor against Akbar, the unconquerable spirit of Rāṇa Pratāp, the intrepid activities of Durgādās—all showed that the Rajputs would sooner break than bend. On the other hand, the disappearance of Rāṇa Sanga after Kanua, the retirement of Udai Singh into the Aravallis, the submission of Amar Singh to Jahāngīr, the acceptance of Mughal peerage by even Ajit Singh and Durgādās, in the end, equally indicated that the Rajput knew when to yield, as well as he knew when to fight. Birbal, Mān Singh, Todar Mal, Jaswant Singh and Jai Singh served the Empire both by their valour and their wisdom. While eminently distinguished for their heroic resistance to the Muslims throughout their history, the Rajputs as a race revealed remarkable capacity for compromise when they yielded up their daughters to be mothers of Muslim Princes and provided the Mughals the best military acumen that

India could then offer. This was no meek or abject surrender, but honourable co-operation that lent dignity to him that gave and him that took, and blessed both. The Rajput's love of independence under these conditions is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the Treaty of the Haras, already referred to, and in the answer that Mān Singh gave to Akbar when he was invited to accept the *Din-i Ilāhi* : " I know of Islam and respect it ; I know of Hinduism and am proud to own it ; but I know nothing of this new faith, and cannot accept it." It was this spirit of self-respecting co-operation that gave strength to the Mughal Empire during the period of its survival. It was the undermining of that spirit, by the folly of Aurangzeb, that laid the axe to the root of its existence. Even after their homes were harried by the desecrating hands of Aurangzeb and his generals, the resumption of a more accommodating attitude, by Bahādur Shāh I and his successor, again found in the Rajputs the spirit of responsive co-operation. The folly of losing their support, therefore, was entirely on the side of the Emperors. Who, except a politically blind and bankrupt people, would have failed to enlist the sympathy and support of a race that possessed the chivalrous qualities of the Rajputs ? Even in their degenerate days, under the later Mughals, when an Imperial army that had been sent to conquer them was dying of thirst in the deserts of Rajputāna, the noble Rajputs offered their enemies water to drink, before they stood up to fight them ! Few countries can boast of such chivalry ; add to this Rāja Todar Mal's '*Bandobast*' which was the sheet-anchor of the Mughal revenue system, and we have the best contributions of the Rajputs to the Mughal Empire, not to speak of the influence of their art.

#### THE EMPIRE AND THE MARATHAS :

The Rajputs, by their very geographical situation, were called upon to lead the Hindu opposition against Islamic dominion in Hindustan. But their chivalrous instincts and traditions, coming into contact with the tact and statesmanship of Akbar, enabled the two to effect a compromise which proved on the whole beneficial to both and the country at large. This state of social and political equilibrium, though disturbed by Aurangzeb to a very large extent, was restored in some degree under his successors. Rajputāna had become a *subah* of the Mughal Empire, its Rājas held a proud position in the hierarchy of the Mughal nobility, and the Rajputs seemed to have acquiesced

in this position. Their wars under Aurangzeb and later were only defensive wars intended to preserve their isolated independence within the four corners of their desert land. Even then, when the hand was proffered them, they did not fail to co-operate with any of the Court parties, chiefly the Hindustāni party. As we have seen, even the proud and intrepid Ajit Singh and Durgādās accepted *mansabs* under the Emperors and gave a daughter in marriage to the Mughal ; a Madho Singh came to the succour of the Emperor when his own *wazir* had rebelled against him. But the Empire's relations with the Marathas were of a very different order altogether.

The Marathas led the Hindu reaction against the Muslims both in the Deccan and in the North ; and on the whole their resistance was more determined than that of the Rajputs or any other non-Muslim community in Hindustan. The Sikhs, the Jāts and the Satnāmis also fought against the Mughals, but their opposition never amounted to anything more than a minority struggling to maintain its religious or political rights. None of them challenged the Imperial pretensions of the Mughals. The task was reserved for the Marathas to pursue to the end ; and although they did not succeed in establishing a lasting Maratha Empire in India (this failure being due to a variety of causes extraneous to the Mughal Empire) they yet proved the most potent external instrument that wrought the ruin of the Mughals in India. How this was achieved has been shown in the body of this work, and no purpose would be served in recounting the tale. But a few comments on the main phases of the struggle should prove useful.

The great Shivāji represented the very soul of the resurgence in Mahārāshtra. The history of this mighty movement and the political struggles that ensued from it are bristling with controversies. It is beyond the scope of these comments to discuss them. Likewise, it is to be remembered that the Hindu renaissance in Mahārāshtra, which carried the Marathas beyond their own homelands, was a complex movement, the positive sides of which it is not our purpose to describe here. A mere political movement would not have appealed to the temperamentally tame and ignorant Māvla peasants and shepherds ; no merely predatory instincts enabled them to sustain their dominion over the larger part of India during more than a century. We agree with Rānadé that " Like the Protestant Reformation in Europe in the 16th century there was a religious, social and literary revival and reformation in India, but notably in the Deccan in the 15th and 16th

centuries. . . . . This religious revival was also of the people, of the masses, and not of the classes. At its head were saints and prophets, poets and philosophers, who sprang chiefly from the lower orders of society, tailors, carpenters, potters, gardeners, shopkeepers, barbers, and even scavengers, more often than Brāhmans." It was this popular and all-sided awakening that was at the root of the Maratha movement, however clumsy its political manifestation might have appeared at times and places. To lose sight of this factor is to miss the true import of a mighty force which determined to a large extent the fate of the Mughal Empire. If the Marathas were mere plunderers, like the Pindāris of a later period, the Mughal Emperors would have blotted them out as did the British. That even a veteran general like Aurangzeb, with all his resources in men and money, could not so stamp them out, alone should suffice to show the deep-rooted and dynamic character of the Maratha rising. "Thus," as Sir Jadunath Sarkar has well pointed out, "a remarkable community of language, creed and life was attained in Mahārāshtra in the seventeenth century even before the political unity was conferred by Shivāji. What little was wanting to the solidarity of the people was supplied by his creation of a national state, the long struggle with the invader from Delhi under his sons, and the imperial expansion of the race under the Peshwas. Thus in the end a tribe,—or rather a collection of tribes and castes,—was fused into a *nation*, and by the end of the 18th century a Maratha people in the political and cultural senses of the term had been formed, though caste distinctions still remained."

A remarkable demonstration, both of the strength of the movement and of its self-directing energy, was made during the crisis with which Mahārāshtra was faced at the death of Sambhāji. The magnitude of this trial was not less than that which France had to face in the early days of its conversion into a republic. Suddenly, in both countries, the King was removed (though in each case by an altogether different cause), and the people were called upon to shoulder the dual responsibilities of internal administration and external attack. That the movement did not collapse under this crisis, but rather gathered momentum and turned the tide against the enemy, was a clear proof of its essentially national character. It is surprising, therefore, in the face of this to find a writer like Sir Jadunath Sarkar declaring that "The cohesion of the peoples in the Maratha State was not organic

but artificial, accidental and therefore precarious. It was solely dependent on the ruler's extraordinary personality and disappeared when the country ceased to produce supermen." We are not here engaged in analysing the causes of Maratha failure in their period of decline, but rather concerned with the sources of their strength in the period of their power ; because this power contributed largely to the break up of the Mughal Empire.

The above observation with regard to the want of cohesion in the State could be more appropriately made with reference to the Empire of the Mughals. The unity of that structure was certainly not organic but artificial, because it was superimposed. It was solely dependent on the ruler's extraordinary personality and disappeared when the *dynasty* ceased to produce supermen. As regards the Marathas, for nearly two centuries, they did produce a wonderful succession of 'supermen' and 'superwomen' who with a remarkable tenacity of purpose overthrow the dominion which had excited their wrath. Hence, there was an essential contrast between the Marathas and the Mughal Empire : the former produced supermen and superwomen because there was among them a genuinely *national movement*, dynamic in its creative energy ; the latter was a fabric that was sought to be woven, no doubt by the hands of supermen, but supermen that had an exotic origin, and had to be produced by the ever declining vitality of a single family of rulers transplanted in a new soil.

The Marathas were, no doubt, lucky in having to confront the Mughals, for the most part, in the period of their decline, unlike the Rajputs who had to face them in the period their freshness. But a large part of their zeal was evoked by the political domination of the Sultans of the Deccan, on the one hand, and the religious fanaticism of Aurangzeb, on the other. The reaction in Mahārāshtra was therefore both political and religious ; it was as it were the child of these two parents. Hence, in its outward manifestation, it took the shape of Hindu rebellion against the Islamic State. Its typical apostle was Swāmi Rāmādās and its typical protagonist Shivāji. The advice of the former to the latter is contained in the following lines :—

तीर्थ क्षेत्रे मोडिली । ब्राह्मण स्थाने भ्रष्ट झाली ।

सकळ पृथ्वी आंदोळली । धर्म गेला ॥

(Places of pilgrimage have been destroyed ; homes of the Brāhmaṇas have been desecrated ; the whole earth is agitated ; *Dharma* is gone).

मराठा तितुका मेळवावा ।

आपुला महाराष्ट्रधर्म वाढवावा ॥

(Marathas should be mobilised ; our *Mahārāshtra-dharma* ought to be propagated).

बहुत लोक मेळवावे ।

एक विचारें भरावे ।

कष्टें करून घसरावें । म्लेच्छांवरी ॥

(Rally all people ; fill them with a singleness of purpose ; sparing no effort, fall upon the *Mlechhas*.)

Chivalry in war towards the enemy was the distinctive virtue of the Rajput. The Maratha had little scruple in taking his adversary at a disadvantage. But the Rajput (e.g. Ajit Singh is alleged to have) retaliated Muslim fanaticism with the destruction of the mosques and the oppression of the Muslims. Shivāji's conduct in this respect was exemplary ; and his model appears to have been kept up on the whole by the Marathas. The testimony of Khāfi Khān (who calls Shivāji "hell-dog" and "sharp son of the devil") regarding this, should suffice : 'He made it a rule that whenever his followers went plundering, they should do no harm to the mosques, the Book of God, or the woman of anyone. Whenever a copy of the sacred *Kurān* came into his hands he treated it with respect and gave it to some of his Mussalman followers. When the women of any Hindu or Muhammadan were taken prisoners by his men, he watched over them until their relations came with a suitable ransom to buy their liberty.' Likewise does he state, 'Sivāji had always striven to maintain the honour of the people in his territories. He persevered in a course of rebellion, in plundering caravans and troubling mankind ; but he entirely abstained from other disgraceful acts, and was careful to maintain the honour of women and children of Muhammadans when they fell into his hands. His injunctions upon this point were very strict, and anyone who disobeyed them received punishment.' It is not averred here that such purity and nobility of conduct were adhered to very punctiliously by the Marathas at all times. Perhaps the extent of their adherence was the measure of their success or at any rate the justification of their conquests.

The inveterate hatred of the Marathas that had marked Aurangzeb's relations with them terminated with his death. It is hazardous to guess what turn their relations would have taken if Aurangzeb



had treated Shivāji as Akbar had done with most of the Rajputs. The difference in the character of the Marathas and the Rajputs, as a people, would count for much in such a calculation. However, with the accession of Bahādur Shāh I on the throne of Delhi, and of Rāja Shāhu in Mahārāshtra, we enter upon a new phase in their mutual relations : better understanding, if not friendship, takes the place of suspicion and hatred. The personal characters of both the sovereigns, perhaps, had much to do with this *rapprochement* ; both were amiable monarchs and were not, evidently, obsessed with their predecessor's antagonisms. This attitude was turned to good account by the diplomatic abilities of the Peshwas, who now to a large extent determined the policy of the Marathas towards the Mughal Empire.

Bahādur Shāh's concessions to Shāhu were the first fruits of this change. The vantage thus gained was further confirmed and consolidated by the Marathas, in the period of confusion that followed the death of Bahādur Shāh I. They now became the virtual masters of, not only their home-provinces, but also of some of the districts they had conquered from the Mughal Empire. With this leverage, under the second of the Peshwas, Bāji Rao I, they pushed forward in all directions within the Mughal dominion. More than anything else, they realised the weakness of the Mughal Empire and, in the words of Bāji Rao, decided to strike at the trunk of the tree, being convinced that its withered branches would fall off as a matter of course. We have observed how the Empire, divided against itself, could not stand against the diplomatic and military incursions of the Marathas. Far from being considered its enemies, they were soon welcomed as its saviours, little reckoning that the Marathas were making good every opportunity to feather their own nests. The good-for-nothing Emperors as well as their corrupt and self-seeking ministers and nobles, each in his own way, unwittingly perhaps, but none the less with the certainty of Fate, furthered the cause most dear to the hearts of the Marathas. The latter became willing instruments in the game of King-making, fatal to the one and fateful to the other. This involved a dual consequence : the Marathas had to shoulder the responsibility of the defence of India against an external invader like Ahmad Shāh Abdālī, on the one hand, and to face the jealousy of their Muslim rivals in India, on the other. They heroically faced both, with what result need not be adjudged here. So far as the Mughal Empire was concerned, it was completely at

their mercy. To mention only the last, the Emperor Alamgīr II was murdered with their connivance, his stop-gap successor was placed on the throne by Sadāshiv Rao Bhāu, during his ephemeral dictatorship at Delhi, and finally the fugitive Shāh Alam II was restored to the capital of his ancestors by Mahadji Scindhia. Even the very last of the Mughal 'Emperors,' Bahādūr Shāh II, was supported by the last of the Peshwas' representative, Nānā Sāheb, and both fell together.

#### THE EMPIRE AND THE EUROPEANS :

In 1858 the last of the Mughal Emperors was condemned by the English for high treason against their Company's Government, and exiled ; at the same time, the last claimant for power on behalf of the Peshwas, Nānā Sāheb, absconded in order to escape the wrath of the same English Government in India. Thus the two great powers—the Mughals and the Marathas—were finally superseded in their dominion by an European government at one and the same time. But the English were not the first Europeans to enter India. The Portuguese Vasco da Gama had landed on the Malabar Coast, at Calicut, in 1498—three hundred and sixty years before the momentous happenings above referred to. The history of these 360 years, read from the point of view of the rise of British dominion in India, is remarkable even in the chequered annals of this country. These years saw the rise and fulfilment of the Mughal dominion, as well as its decline and fall, together with that of the Marathas ; they also witnessed the adventures—commercial, missionary and political—of a multitude of European powers : Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, French, German and Flemish, besides the English. Neither the rivalries of these powers, fascinating in themselves, nor the causes of the ultimate triumph of the last named, form the subject of our scrutiny here. But the representatives of all these nationalities, as well as others not mentioned here (like the Italian, Spanish, Greek, Armenian and Turkish), had vital contacts with the Mughal Empire in a variety of ways which are worthy of notice even in a general review such as is attempted in this brief Resumé.

So far as the Mughal Empire was concerned, the national distinctions between the various Europeans were of little account. With the exception of the Turks of Rūmi they were all infidels, Christians or Firangian. For our purposes, therefore, it is both desirable and

historically more accurate to speak of the Europeans as a whole, rather than of the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English, etc. However, to be fair, the nationality of each party cited must be borne in mind, though only as a subordinate factor. Perhaps, it will also be convenient to consider the relations of the Empire with the Europeans under the following heads : (1) Commercial, (2) Missionary, (3) Political, and (4) Miscellaneous.

*Commercial* : It was Europe accustomed to the luxuries of 'the gorgeous East' that, finding its customary route blocked by the Turk, sought new ways of reaching Asia. These endeavours resulted in two great discoveries, among several, which have shaped the destinies of both the East and the West since. The discovery of America by Columbus, in 1492, and of India by Vasco da Gama, in 1498, were both momentous events in the history of the world. The former, being an undeveloped continent, led to a scramble for colonies among European nations ; the latter having settled governments and an ancient commerce, naturally led to commercial rivalries. The Portuguese having been first in the field, as a matter of course, reaped the first advantages. But they were not satisfied with mere commerce ; their missionary zeal and political ambitions made their relations with the Muslim states rather complex and complicated. They had acquired a strong footing on the West Coast with their conquest of Goa, in 1510, and their relations were at first confined to their neighbouring kingdoms of Gujarat, Bijapur, Vijayanagara, etc. Akbar was the first of the Mughal Emperors to come into direct contact with them. Their relations with them have already been traced in some detail earlier in this book. From a commercial point of view, these relations were on the whole very friendly, resulting in advantages to both parties. The Mughals, being essentially a land-power, had no navy to speak of ; hence, they were obliged to be friendly towards the Portuguese and other Europeans who could easily disturb their pilgrim and other traffic on the West Coast. Despite this consideration, however, under Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb, particularly, the harmony between the Empire and the Portuguese was broken by the close association of the latter with piracy, both in the Arabian Sea and in the Bay of Bengal. This constitutes a dark chapter in the history of European doings in the East which involved the Dutch and the English as well. Not satisfied with the legitimate profits of commerce they ventured into the shady regions of

privateering, evaded the customs and other duties of the Empire and thereby brought down upon themselves the might of the local or central authorities. Otherwise, the Europeans of all nationalities participated in the rich trade of the Empire through their 'factories' scattered throughout the Mughal dominions and outside, along the coasts as well as inland.

A few glimpses of this have been given in the body of this work, such as the account from Bernier. Tavernier, Manucci and other contemporary European sojourners in India also throw ample light upon the European commerce of this period, as well as the rivalries, mutual recriminations and jealousies of the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English, in their scramble for the patronage of the Great Mughal. From the Dutch records we have cited a passage indicating the protection that even the fanatical Aurangzeb afforded the European factories after Shivāji's sack of Surat. Sir Thomas Roe and the host of English ambassadors visited the Emperors only to secure such patronage. In short, the history of the English in India is the story of the transformation of a company of traders into the rulers of this paradise of commerce; that story also involving the discomfiture of both their European rivals and the Indian rulers, including the Mughal Emperors.

*Missionary* : One of the secrets of the success of the English was their non-interference in religious matters. In this they were guided both by the traditions of their own country and the warning of the Portuguese example. In tracing the history of the Jesuit missions to the Court of Akbar, we noticed how the Portuguese and their instruments, the Jesuit missionaries, tried to serve the interests of both this world and the next; in other words, they aimed at the establishment in India of a firm and lasting Christian dominion. The attempt to convert the Mughal Emperor, as a thin end of the missionary wedge, failed after Akbar and Jahāngīr. Under Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb set in a Muslim reaction. But, from a religious point of view, the Christians as such did not suffer even under the bigoted Alamgīr. The extent of patronage shown to the missionaries under other Emperors of the house of Bābur was extraordinary; it looks even excessive and obsequious when we remember the times in which they lived. They were the honoured guests of the Emperors; they enjoyed privileges which were the envy of the Mughal nobility; Christian effigies and symbols were received

within the Imperial palaces ; Princes of the Imperial house were allowed to be baptised, and churches to be built at Agra, Lahore and other Imperial cities, preaching and proselytising were freely permitted, and the Gospels were translated into Persian under Imperial auspices. Jesuit fathers like Manrique and Xavier were even appointed tutors to the Princes ; and the careers of Mirza Zu'lqarnain and Donna Juliana indicate the extent of Christian influence under the later Mughals. Even instances of the reconversions of Christian fugitives, after their conversion to Islam, are not wanting. The 'persecutions' under Shāh Jahān and Aurangzeb have been demonstrated to be not religious but provoked by the political intransigence of the Portuguese.

*Political* : The political proclivities of the Portuguese have already been alluded to. Though less decided, the other Europeans were not lacking in political ambition. The exertions of Dupleix to found a French Empire in India are well known. Sir Thomas Roe had warned the East India Company against diverting their energies into wasteful and precarious channels such as the Portuguese had done. But, as we have noticed, there were other Englishmen like Sir Josiah Child who believed in the possibilities of establishing a lasting English dominion in India. Though the attempts of that generation failed, for the time being, the ultimate achievements of the British have demonstrated the essential soundness of that dream. We have not the space to deal with all the political escapades of the English and their European fore-runners in this direction ; but the trend of European ambitions in India, especially during the declining days of the Mughal Empire, is indicated by the following passage from Bolts' *Considerations of the Affairs of Bengal* :—

"The Mughal Empire is overflowing with gold and silver. She has always been feeble and defenceless. It is a miracle that no European Prince with a maritime power has ever attempted the conquest of Bengal. By a single stroke infinite wealth might be acquired, which would counter-balance the mines of Brazil and Peru. *The Policy of the Moghuls is bad ; their army is worse ; they are without a navy. The Empire is exposed to perpetual revolts. Their ports and rivers are open to foreigners. The country might be conquered, or laid under contribution, as easily as the Spaniards overwhelmed the naked Indians of America.*

"A rebel subject, named Ali Verdi Khān, has torn away the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from the Moghul Empire. He has treasure to the value of thirty millions sterling. His yearly revenue must be at least two millions. The provinces are open to the sea. Three

ships with fifteen hundred or two thousand regulars would suffice for the undertaking. The British nation would co-operate for the sake of the plunder and the promotion of their trade."

*Miscellaneous* : We stumble against Europeans of all descriptions throughout the history of the Mughal Empire in India from the moment of Akbar's first acquaintance with them at Cambay. Besides traders, missionaries and political agents, they appear also as mercenaries, physicians, surgeons, distillers, engineers, gunners, pirates and impostors. This miscellaneous lot came from all nationalities of Europe. They were acting as individuals mostly, or perhaps in groups, but always representing themselves, and not any national or responsible organisation. Still, the times were such that even their more respectable compatriots in India often winked at their doings, because they were helpful in their own way in pushing forward the cause of the Europeans in this country. The support derived from these insidious forces in building up European enterprise, whether commercial, military or political, is not to be lost sight of. The European on that account was both feared and respected, if not also looked upon with suspicion. In relation to the Empire, or rather the Emperors, we come across great missionaries like Manrique, Aquaviva and Xavier, high political and commercial emissaries like Mildenhall, Roe and Hawkins, La Boullé le Gouz and Bebbler, individual adventurers like Manucci, disinterested travellers like Bernier and Tavernier, Mughal officials like Zu'lqarnain and god-mothers like Donna Juliana. In the writings of some of these, we have pen-portraits of a host of European path-finders who directly and indirectly contributed to the destruction of the Mughal Empire and the raising of a new edifice out of its ruins.

#### THE LEGACY OF THE EMPIRE :

A tree, it is said, is judged by the fruit it bears. Having surveyed in some detail the history of the Mughal Empire in India, the question that naturally arises in our minds is, *What fruit did that Empire bear?* We have witnessed its seed planted by Bābur, the sapling uprooted under Humāyūn, replanted in a soil weeded and enriched by the labours of Sher Shāh, nurtured at the hands of Akbar, bearing fruit under Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān—a golden harvest, perhaps, which yellowed in the Autumn of Aurangzeb's rule, then withered rapidly in the winter of the 'later Mughal' régime, its branches either falling or hacked off to prevent the rot

which had set in at its roots reaching its surviving parts. The Marathas struck at its rotten trunk which could not be propped up with all the efforts of the Afghans, Najib Khān and Ahmad Shāh Abdālī. Its revivifying offshoots were smothered either by the Marathas or by the English. An English oak now stands where once stood an Indian banyan. The Nizām's dominions alone survive to-day to remind us of its several *subahs*. But this to all outward seeming ; the discerning eye might still see the entire past at our doors. The best and the worst of the Mughal legacy is in our very midst.

*Political* : The present is never entirely the legacy of the past ; it is the outcome of a multiplicity of causes among which contemporary forces are undoubtedly the most dynamic. Nevertheless, it is not to be denied that the legacy of the past—especially the more recent past—is one of the most potent influences at work in shaping our future, for better or for worse. Hence, a candid recognition of our indebtedness to the past (mixed as it was in character) is a desideratum to progress. To cite only the most recent acknowledgment of this, the *Report of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform* (1933-34) states, "The arts of government and administration were not indeed unknown to the earlier Hindu Kings, and the strong hand of the Mogul Emperors who reigned between 1526 and 1707 maintained a State which ultimately embraced the larger part of India and did not suffer by comparison with, if it did not even surpass in splendour, the contemporary monarchies in Europe."

This "splendour" was not a merely deceptive glow, as is often represented ; though we claim for it neither infallibility nor perfection, since, "like all systems of government, it has, at times, fallen into error, it is well to remember the greatness of its achievement." It is also well to caution the reader against the not too infrequent habit of judging the Mughals by the standards of our own times rather than by theirs ; and secondly, to remember that there is always a disparity between the promise and the fulfilment, whether in the medieval or in the modern governments of all countries. Yet, like the British, the Mughals, although they were foreigners, gradually (perhaps more rapidly) worked up towards popular acceptance. The measure of their success or failure is not without instruction to our generation.

The predominant trait of the Mughal rulers of India was their

political instinct, if by this we understand the passion for conquest and the desire to rule. All their virtues and vices as rulers are traceable to this source. The adventurous Bābur, the vacillating Humāyun, the determined Akbar, the self-indulgent Jahāngīr, the imperious Shāh Jahān, and the dogged Aurangzeb displayed this character to an eminent degree, each in his own individual manner. Even under the later Mughals, most of whom were far advanced in age when they ascended the throne, we witness their love of campaigning as with Bahādur Shāh I, their unconquerable spirit as in the proud declaration of sorrow by Kām Bakhsh at his being captured alive, their propensity to govern as in the peurile appointment of infants to high offices in which the imbecile Ahmad Shāh indulged, and in the maintenance of all the regalia of their once imperious state by the last of the Mughals, even when the "Emperor" was not master of his own person. The training of Princes of the ruling house to bear Imperial responsibilities, on the one hand, and their ruthless suppression of all other instincts in their one consuming passion to ascend the throne, on the other, were indications of the same trait. The successive revolts of the Mughal Princes and their declaration, not merely of independence but of their assumption of the insignia of the Imperator, were equally symptomatic of that identical characteristic. Akbar's conception of the union of secular and spiritual sovereignty in his own person, looked at in the light of this political instinct to rule, appears but as the obverse of which Aurangzeb's fanatical idea of a Muslim State was the reverse. The one pointed the way to success, the other to failure; hence Mr. Pringle Kennedy's philosophic warning to his countrymen—quoted earlier—"The English won India by pursuing the methods of Akbar, let them not lose it by imitating those of Aurangzeb."

The essence of political genius lies in the spirit of compromise, the capacity to understand divergences of interest, the ability to assimilate and synthesise. The Mughals showed these virtues eminently, generation after generation, during their rule of over two centuries in India. Bābur and Humāyun, though of an essentially religious frame of mind, could subordinate their sectarian loyalties to political exigencies, seeing that they could gain the support of Persia only by changing their creed from Sunni to Shiah. Akbar, not less intensely (perhaps more truly) religious than Aurangzeb, saw at once, with the unerring insight of a statesman, both the true



essence of all religions and the vital requirements of the political situation. He, of all rulers of India, seemed to have grasped the secret of welding into a national harmony the composite and discordant elements dwelling within this "warring world of Hindustan," and honestly attempted to "alchemise old hates into the gold of Love, and make it current."

Aurangzeb, the very embodiment of an uncompromising "die-hard" in matters religious, could still keep in high command powerful Rajput generals and diplomats like Jaswant Singh and Jai Singh, and refrain from either killing or converting Shāhu, the son of Sambhāji, who was completely at his mercy. Jahāngīr and Shāh Jahān and all the other Mughals, whatever their personal leanings, on the whole maintained the eminently practical policy of Akbar, with negligible exceptions.

As a result of this, the conception of a National State was made possible, a State in which all sects of Muslims and all castes of Hindus, foreigners and Indians alike, could find employment for their talents, whether they belonged to the ruling race or not. The Mughals settled in this country and made this land their own. There was therefore a complete identity of interests between the rulers and the ruled—at least to the extent it was possible under a monarchy, and a medieval monarchy at that. In their subjects' contentment lay their best security. Within a generation or two the Mughals became *Indians*. They made this country their *patria* and did not look forward to enjoying their pensions or their profits away in distant homes. Hence they employed native Indians in all departments of the State, both civil and military, without restriction and without any racial discrimination. They needed no safeguards because they had nothing to keep away safely from their subjects excepting their throne; but even this evoked a genuine loyalty (except under Aurangzeb) because the person who occupied it was not unoften the son of a Muslim father and a Hindu mother (though never *vice versa*); the throne itself and the palace in which it stood displayed the workmanship of Hindu and Muslim craftsmen; the wealth which made it possible, and partly was made possible by it, came from Hindu and Muslim coffers, collected by Hindu and Muslim officers; as also were the armies that defended them all, manned and officered by Hindu, Muslim, foreign and

Indian men, selected on a basis of merit rather than of race. In short, as Lord William Bentinck acknowledged,

“In many respects, the Mohammedans surpassed our (British) rule ; they settled in the countries which they conquered ; they intermixed and intermarried with the natives ; they admitted them to all privileges ; the interests and sympathies of the conquerors and the conquered became identified. Our (British) policy, on the contrary, has been the reverse of this,—cold, selfish and unfeeling.”

We and the British have been the common inheritors of this legacy in India. Through the acquisition of the *Diwāni* and other rights of the Mughal *subah* of Bengal, by the Company of traders, the administrative institutions of the Mughal Empire were transmitted to the British dominion in India ; but these—by the flux of time and circumstances, have been transformed almost beyond recognition now. Still, the original ground-work is visible in some parts ; our provincial and district administrations are derived from Mughal proto-types ; the powers of our externally appointed governors and viceroys, not altogether responsive to the chords of national life, are the relics of a past that is still living ; our Civil Service, composed of men of-all-work Imperially selected to administer Imperial as well as local interests, still reminds us of the *mansabdārs*, shorn of course of their feudal military character and functions, and selected on more scientific lines ; our legal system is modern, but some of our laws are derived from codes prevalent in Mughal times ; our revenue system is a direct descendant of the Mughal organisation ; our army is manned mostly by Indians, no doubt, but is largely officered, financed and controlled by an authority not more responsible to the people, for whose defence it is ostensibly maintained, than was the Mughal army ; and finally the salaries of our governors, viceroys and our secret service men, just as they are still on the Grand Mughal scale, are controlled as well by a power that has stepped into the shoes of the great Mughals.

This is not to denounce the present administration, but only to point out the historic survivals of a system that still persists despite the well-meaning efforts of an enlightened nation that is making the unique experiment of engrafting occidental democracy on an oriental stalk. Perhaps it could not have been otherwise in the nature of things, as the progenitors of the present government, consciously and deliberately, aimed at emulating the Mughals, as may be inferred from the following passage from a despatch of

Warren Hastings, recommending to the Court of Directors of the East India Company the publication of Gladwin's translation of the *Ain-i-Akbari* :

The work, says the Minute "will serve to assist the judgment of the Court of Directors on many points of importance to the first interests of the Company. It will shew where the measures of their administration approached to the first principles, *which, perhaps, will be found superior to any that have been built on their ruins*, and certainly most easy, as the most familiar to the minds of the people, and when any deviation from them may be likely to counteract, or to assimilate with them."

But, if Mughal survivals are to be traced in comparatively purer forms they might be found perhaps in our Indian States. For, as Sir Jadunath Sarkar has observed :

"The two hundred years of Mughal rule, . . . gave to the whole of northern India and to much of the Deccan also, oneness of official language, administrative system and coinage, and also a popular *lingua franca* for all classes except the Hindu priests and the stationary village folk. *Even outside the territory directly administered by the Mughal Emperors, their administrative system, official titles, Court etiquette, and monetary type were borrowed, more or less, by the neighbouring Hindu rājās.*" He further points out, "All the twenty Indian *subahs* of the Mughal Empire were governed by exactly the same administrative machinery, with exactly the same procedure and official titles. Persian was the one language used in all official records, etc . . Officials and soldiers were frequently transferred from one province to another. Thus, the native of one province felt himself almost at home in another province ; traders and travellers passed most easily from city to city, *subah* to *subah*, and all realised the imperial oneness of this vast country."

*Economic* : India at present occupies a high and honoured place in the commerce of the world. Although her trade-history dates from very ancient times, her modern prestige is largely derived from the days of the Mughals. In more recent times, no doubt, our trade has grown considerably in volume and also changed in character ; but many of the conditions that have contributed to this transformation are directly traceable to the period under survey.

In the first place, such valuable commercial traditions as our country undoubtedly possesses, pre-suppose the existence of economic prosperity ; secondly, it is also axiomatic that such prosperity itself could not exist without there being continuous peace over stretches of time and country. We are too aware of the wars and rebellions, piracies and dacoities, famines and pestilences that punctured the

annals of the Mughals in India, to exaggerate the extent of that peace and prosperity ; but, when due allowance is made for all such accidents, in the history of those two hundred years and more, we have a clear balance in favour of an economic surplus. If it had been otherwise, the numerous Europeans who flocked to this country would have left our shores long ago, as mice do a sinking ship. The East India Company built up the British Empire in India out of this trade ; and its " nabobs," in service and in retirement, stimulated the Industrial Revolution in all its phases in England. In a scense, a substantial part of the political and economic greatness of England has risen out of the Mughal Empire.

The Mughals themselves were comparative strangers to the sea, and did not therefore, perhaps, pay as much attention to the creation of a fleet as the situation increasingly demanded. There are, however, references in the *Ain-i-Akbari* to the ship-building and the shipping trade, regulation of customs, etc., though most of this must have reference to river traffic. The Tamils and the Māplahs of Malabar were used to a sea-faring life, but their adventurous spirits were not harnessed by the Mughals, perhaps on account of their Empire not having extended far enough to include them. One contemporary writer has affirmed that ' the Moghul's ships carry greater Burdens than those of Europe. . . . They use neither the Compass nor Quadrant, but sail from India to Persia, Bassora, Mocha, Mozambik, Mombasa, Sumatra, Maccassa, and other places, only by the help of the North-Star, and the Rising and Setting of the Sun.' But more and more, particularly under the later Mughals, the trade with Europe was carried on in foreign bottoms, and the Mughals found themselves increasingly at the mercy of the Europeans even to defend the shores of the Empire from pirates, as also the pilgrim traffic to Arabia. That this legacy of comparative neglect of the marine and naval requirements of India has duly come down to our own times is apparent from our subsequent maritime history. The following abstract from *The Times of India* of 2 October, 1934, will be read with interest and profit :—

" Of the forces in existence in India to-day the Royal Indian Navy (just inaugurated) must be the oldest. There has always been a sea force of some description in Indian waters from the early days of the East India Company ; in fact, the present Indian Navy was born in 1612 when the newly formed Company sent a squadron of four ships under Captain Thomas Best to trade with the country. Though the vessels were merely

merchantmen, they were quite capable of defending themselves—a necessary provision considering that the Portuguese had already been here for nearly a hundred years. As a matter of fact, Best's squadron was not long in showing what it could do. It anchored in Surat Roads and immediately afterwards, in a three-days battle, defeated the Portuguese. *This apparently so impressed the Emperor Jahāngir that he granted the British squadron a firmān to trade.* The Mughal Emperor's interest in the force did not lapse after the first affair at Surat, and from 1759-1829 a *Captain of the Indian Marine was appointed annually to the post of Admiral to the Moghul Emperor, with head-quarters at Surat, in order to defend Moghul trading vessels. The officer fortunate enough to hold the post received about Rs. 85,000 for his year's service.*"

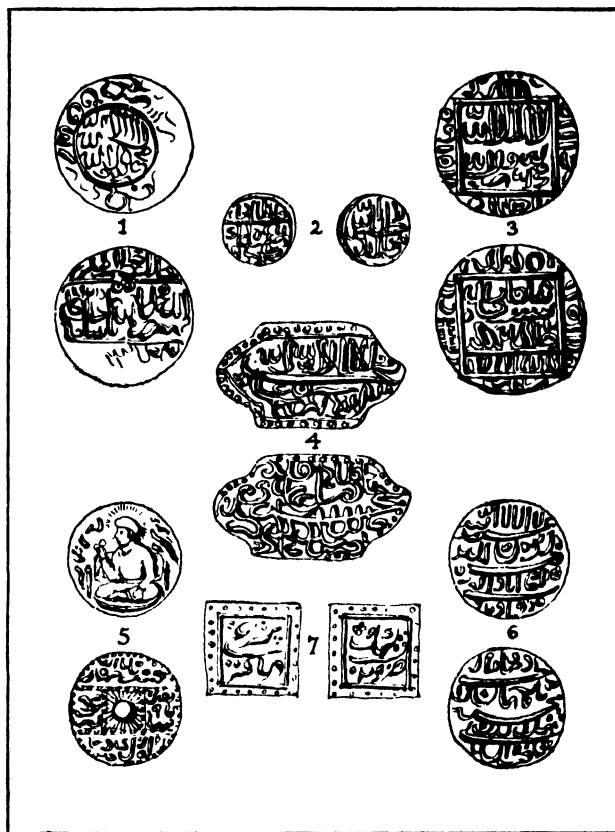
The East India Company's marine had therefore to do service as the "Indian Navy", while the Mughal Emperor's marine conscience was satisfied with the payment of Rs. 85,000 to his "Captain of the Indian Marine." That the same attitude has been maintained by the British Government in India is clear from the fact that, since 1863, *"it was decided on grounds of economy to abolish the Indian Navy as it stood and turn the defence of Indian waters over to the Royal Navy (of Great Britain) . . . India subscribed £ 100,000 a year as its share along with other dominions and colonies for empire defence."* The main point to be noted is that, as under the Mughals, our maritime interests are still in other than Indian hands.

As regards other economic survivals from Mughal times, we might note that our internal trade still follows in the main the beaten tracks of old—the same roads and river-routes and the same vehicles and country-craft are to be found, where these have not been displaced by the railways and other modern innovations; agriculture still forms the most extensive industry and retains all the features it possessed, perhaps, in earlier than Mughal times; some of the Mughal canals still water large tracts of agricultural land, especially in the Punjab; indigenous banking and instruments and modes of exchange still operate in most parts of the country as they did in Mughal times; and the Indian coins\* and weights and measures, where they are not identical, are cognisable direct lineal descendants of their Mughal ancestors. Virjee Voras and Jagat Seths of Mughal fame have their descendants still dominating our economic life to the extent that their foreign rivals permit them to exercise their talents. The Industrial

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\* E.g. Our Rupee, the sheet-anchor of our currency to which our Government clings with inordinate attachment, is identical with the coin introduced by Sher Shāh four hundred years ago.

SHARMA : *Crescent in India*



Coins of the Empire



Revolution with its infinite trail of transformations still encounters, at every step in this country, obstacles bequeathed to us by the Mughal economy.

**Social :** The Mughals were as bold in their social innovations as they were adventurous in the political field. To appreciate their endeavours in this direction we have to remember the character of Muslim rule in India prior to their advent, the conservative traditions of the Hindu and Muslim society in which they worked, and the nature of the times in which they lived. No doubt theirs was the age of Nānak, Kabīr and the great socio-religious movements in all provinces ; but to initiate reforms on a comprehensive national basis, it was necessary that the attempt should be made by the Pādishāh of Hindustan and not merely by the founder of a new sect. Akbar is enshrined in our hearts even to this day because he did not shrink from the great task of attempting to found a new society in India, a new nation that would be neither Hindu nor Muslim merely, nor any other, but INDIAN. In the memorable words of Bartoli, quoted earlier :

*"For an Empire ruled by one head, it was a bad thing to have the members divided among themselves, and at variance one with the other... We ought, therefore, to bring them all into one, but in such a fashion that they should be one and all, with the great advantage of not losing what is good in any one religion, while gaining whatever is better in another. In that way honour would be rendered to God, peace would be given to the peoples, and security to the Empire."*

Society in India is essentially religious and was more so under the Mughals. Hence, the social reformer had to encounter at every step the deep-seated religious sentiments of the people, whether Hindu or Muslim. And when that reformer was an alien like Akbar, the obstacles assumed a formidable shape. If a reformer arose among the Hindus or the Muslims themselves, however difficult his task, it did not seem quite so presumptuous, as when an Akbar attempted to transform both and fuse them into, not a new sect like the *Nānak-panthis* or *Kabir-panthis* but a new and homogeneous NATION. We have already traced the history of his herculean endeavours in this direction, and there is no need of repetition. The prohibition of cow-killing and compulsory *salī*, the raising of the age for circumcision and marriage, the social control of drink and prostitution, the composition of sectarian differences among various communities by suggesting a common solvent, the abolition of invidious taxes based



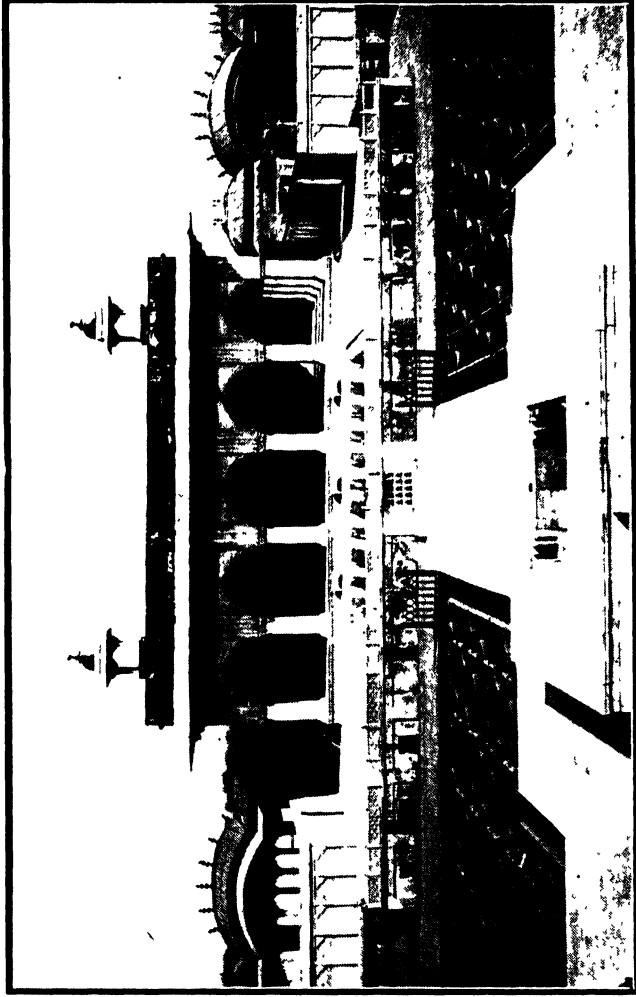
on religious differences, despite the loss to the treasury, the admission of all to equal official status, irrespective of race or creed, and above all, the encouragement of inter-marriage between such divergent communities as the Hindus and the Muslims,—were the various channels through which Akbar sought to realise his great dream : to,

Cull from every faith and race the best,.....  
 Gathering here and there,  
 From each fair plant, the blossom choicest grown,  
 To wreath a crown not only for the king,  
 But in due time for every Musalman,  
 Brahmin and Buddhist, Christian and Parsee,  
 Thro' all the warring world of Hindustan..... for no  
 Mirage of glory, but for power to fuse  
 My myriads into union under one, . . .  
 And alchemise old hates into the gold  
 Of Love, and make it current.

This dream of Akbar is still the dream of India, and that is why we cherish in our hearts the dreamer no less than the dream. For a time the orthodox Brāhman and the proud Rajput, the heterodox Shiah, and even the orthodox Sunni, with a few notable exceptions, seemed to acquiesce in the great endeavour ; nay, the idealists among both communities even looked forward to the coming of a Mahdi or the advent of a Rāmrajya ! Croakers like Badāuni, of course, there were, who denounced Akbar as an apostate, but the willing acquiescence and active co-operation of the unbending Rajput in the attempted social synthesis was the measure of the reformer's success. That this did not endure in all its manifoldness throughout the Mughal régime was due to a variety of causes (the most notable being the reaction under Aurangzeb) which need not be examined here. But that the dream was cherished by successive generations is indicated by the characters of Princess Jahānara and Princes Dārā and Akbar. The readmission into the Hindu fold of the daughter of Ajit Singh after having been Farrukh-siyar's queen until his assassination, in 1719, might be taken as the last historical token of this reformation started in the sixteenth century by Akbar. That enlightenment was eclipsed in the general decadence that followed until certain aspects of it were re-emphasised by a Rāja Rām Mohan Roy, a Lord William Bentinck, a Swāmi Dayānand Saraswati in more recent times. Even the unrealised or partially realised social dream of the great Mughal is therefore one of the most valuable of his



SHARMA : *Crescent in India*



Inside Fort, Agra

legacies to our struggling generation. The Indian National Congress is attempting to solve the very problems which the Ibādat-Khāna had failed to resolve even under the auspices of Akbar's genius for synthesis.

*Cultural* : Mughal Culture is a very vast subject which is as alluring as it is inexhaustible. We do not seek to dwell upon all its phases here. We have space only for a few comments on some of its most striking and permanent features. The Empire of the Mughals has vanished for ever, but their personality endures in a thousand forms, visible and invisible. In our dress, speech, etiquette, thought, literature, music, painting and architecture the impress of the Mughal is ever present. It is neither purely Hindu nor purely Muslim, but a harmonious and exquisite blending of the two. The art of a people truly reveals their soul ; and the real *Indian* art of to-day is a legacy come down to us from Mughal times. Where the earlier Muslims merely destroyed everything Hindu, the Mughals assimilated, synthesised and recreated in immortal form.

Our Hindustāni dress, both of men and women, which is so elegant, graceful, dignified and charming, when not hybridised with European misfits, is the same that we see in Mughal paintings. Our Hindustāni bearing, etiquette and forms of address, which are so majestic and yet not pompous, are a bequest to us from the Mughal courtiers and citizens. Our Hindustāni music and musical instruments are those that gave pleasure to Mughal sovereigns, sardārs and subjects alike, and derive their melodies from the soul of a melodious people. Our Hindustāni painting with its delicate touches and delightful hues is but a vivid reflection of those picturesque times. Our Hindustāni literature, whether Persian, Hindu, Sanskrit or Urdu, has come down to us with the impress of writers who either directly or indirectly enjoyed Mughal favour and patronage. And lastly, our Hindustāni architecture, whether Hindu or Muslim, instead of following radically different lines, as might have been expected, "exhibits, on the contrary, precisely the same fusion of Hindu and Muslim ideals, the same happy blend of elegance and strength."

As Sir John Marshall has observed, "Seldom in the history of mankind, has the spectacle been witnessed of two civilizations, so vast and so strongly developed, yet so radically dissimilar as the Muhammadan and Hindu, meeting and mingling together. The very contrasts which existed between them, the wide divergences in their culture and their religions, make the history of their impact peculiarly instructive and lend an added interest to

the art and above all to the architecture which their united genius called into being."

The efforts of the two large communities, which were apparently hostile to each other, to bring about a social harmony would indeed be a very profitable field of research and must be taken up independently. But it may be noted here in passing that the spirit of the age was peculiarly favourable to such endeavours. Among the Muhammadan rulers of the several kingdoms into which the Delhi Sultanate had broken up were several who might be considered the forerunners of the Mughals in this respect. Ferishta mentions that one of the Purbiya Sultans of Gaur enlisted 5000 Hindu footmen as his body-guard; and, according to Havell, "Muhammadan culture in Gaur, as in other parts of India, was a graft upon the old Hindu stalk and not an exotic transplanted from Arabia to Indian soil." Likewise, at Jaunpur, under the patronage of the Sharki Sultans, mosques were built by Indian master-builders, both Hindu and Musalman. The memory of Husāin Shāh (1452-72) is still cherished in Bengal for his efforts to bring together the Hindu and Musalman communities, and his patronage of vernacular literature and art. The first Bengali translation of the *Bhāgavata* is said to have been done by Mālādhār Vasu, by his orders; as also a translation of the *Mahā-bhārata*. The Sultan is also credited with founding the *Satyā-Pir* cult, a forerunner of the *Dīn-Ilāhī*. The Hindu Chaitanya and the Muslim Kabīr owned large following from the Muslim and Hindu communities respectively. In the South, in the Bahamani kingdom, Brāhmaṇa ministers controlled the finances of a Muslim State, and the Vijaynagara rulers, despite their political conflicts with their Muslim neighbours, enlisted Musalmans in their armies and patronised their religion. Prince Ibrāhīm of Golkonda (1560-81) similarly patronised Telugu literature. In Gujarat, Mālwa and Rajputana there are numerous examples of the blending of the Hindu and Muslim in architecture. But perhaps the most eminent of the forerunners of Akbar was Zainu-l Abidīn, Sultan of Kashmir (1417-67). Besides his abolition of the *jizya* and the toleration of the Hindus, he encouraged literature, painting and music, and caused many translations to be made from Sanskrit, Arabic and other languages, irrespective of religion.

Under the Mughals, we find, therefore, only the fruition of this widespread tendency in a more prominent form. After a detail-

ed survey of the history of Mughal painting, Smith observes, "Perhaps the most fruitful general observation arising from such perusal is that of the predominance of Hindu names. For instance, in the *waqiat-i-Bāburi*, . . . . . out of twenty-two names, nineteen are Hindu, and only three Muslim. Similarly, in Abu-l Fazl's catalogue of seventeen artists, only four are Muhammadan, while thirteen are Hindu." As with painting so with architecture and the other arts and literature. It is not so much the number of Hindus that were employed that matters, but the fact that they were generously appreciated and patronised on a large scale and not merely as exceptions. Among the thousands of artists, artisans and master-builders that were engaged throughout the Mughal period in the construction of the numerous buildings, palaces and mosques, there were both Hindus and Muslims who worked in unison in order to produce the exquisite effects which attract to this day admiring tourists from all parts of the world. In some, as in the Jahāngiri Mahāl, the Hindu type predominated ; in others, as in the temples of Brindāvan, the Muslim restraint in external ornamentation showed itself. But these might be considered as experimental and tentative designs. The perfection was reached where the Hindu and the Muslim both merged their individualities in a sublime form, like that of the Tāj Mahāl, which is neither Hindu nor Muslim but INDIAN.

A few words may be added on our literary and scientific heritage. Hindu mathematical works like the *Lilāvati* were translated into Persian. A Sawai Jai Singh of Amber constructed his wonderful astronomical observatories at Jaipur, Mathura, Benares and Delhi. A Sanskrit Pandit like Jagannāth was patronised by even the comparatively orthodox Muslim Emperor Shāh Jahān. The Hindu Epics and the *Vedas* and *Upanishads* and several other works on Hindu religion and philosophy, like the *Yogavāsishtha* and *Bhagavad Gita*, were not merely translated by Muslim scholars into Persian, but were also studied with great avidity by Mughal Princes like Dārā Shukoh and even Mughal Princesses like Jahānara. Likewise was Persian literature imbibed by the Hindus in the *madrasās* which were attended by both communities alike. Rājās Mān Singh and Todar Mal were great enthusiasts in the propagation of Persian among their co-religionists. Thus, chronicles in Persian came to be written by Hindus like Ishvar Dās, Bhīm Sen and Sujān Rāi. A Bīrbal received the title of *kavi Rāi* on account of his poetry ; and a Sūr

Dās (the blind bard of Agra) was greatly admired. As another poet of Akbar's court declared, "Gang excels in sonnets, and Bīrbal in the *kavitta* metre; Keshav's meaning is ever profound, but Sūr possesses the excellence of all three." Nevertheless, by universal acknowledgment the Emperor of Hindu literature in the age of the Mughals was Tulsi Dās. Vincent Smith has described him as "the tallest tree in the 'Magic garden' of medieval Hindu poesy." That Hindu, he writes with admiration, "was the greatest man of his age in India—greater even than Akbar himself, inasmuch as the conquest of the hearts and minds of millions of men and women effected by the poet was an achievement infinitely more lasting and important than any or all of the victories gained in the war by the monarch."

The Mughals, no doubt, conquered Hindustan and established their Empire therein, but a survey of their culture leads one to believe that their hearts were taken captive by the Spirit of otherworldliness which has been so characteristic of Hindustan in all ages. Thus the Titan Aurangzeb sighed at the end of his days :

*Old age has arrived and weakness has grown strong; strength has left my limbs. I came alone and am going away alone. I know not who I am and what I have been doing.... The days that have been spent except in austerities have only left regret behind them. I have not at all done any (true) government of the realm or cherishing of the peasantry. Life, so valuable, has gone away for nothing. The Master has been in my house, but my darkened eyes cannot see His splendour. Life lasts not; no trace is left of the days that are no more and of the future there is no hope.*

*'Whatever the wind may be,  
I am launching my boat on the water.'*

The greatest of the Mughals wisely inscribed on the *Buland Darwāzā* (Fath-pur-Sikri) at the end of all his glorious achievements :—

*"The world is a bridge; pass over it; but build no house upon it. The world endures but an hour; spend it in prayer; who sees the rest? Thy greatest riches are the alms which thou hast given. Know that the world is a mirror where fortune has appeared, then fled: call nothing thine that thy eyes cannot see."*

## BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY\*

- BENI PRASAD : *History of Jahāngir*.  
 BEVERIDGE : *The Emperor Akbar*.  
 BINYON : *Akbar*.  
 BROWN : *The Coins of India*.  
 CUNNINGHAM : *Sikh History*.  
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 ELLIOT AND DOWSON : *The History of India as told by its own Historians*  
 (8 vols.).  
 ELPHINSTONE : *History of India*.  
 ERSKINE : *A History of India under the First Two Sovereigns of the House*  
*of Taimur, Baber and Humayun* (2 vols.).  
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 FRANCKLIN : *History of the Reign of Shah Alam*.  
 GARRATT : *The Legacy of India*.  
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 IBN HASAN : *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*.  
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*Organisation and Administration*.  
 ISHWARI PRASAD : *History of Qaraunah Turks ; Mediæval India*.  
 KEENE : *The Fall of the Moghul Empire of Hindustan ; The Turks in*  
*India*.  
 KENNEDY : *The History of the Great Moghuls* (2 vols.).  
 KHOSLA : *Mughal Kingship and Nobility*.  
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*India at the Death of Akbar*.  
 OWEN : *The Fall of the Mogul Empire*.  
 PAYNE : *Akbar and the Jesuits*.  
 QANUNGO : *Sher Shah*.  
 RANADE : *Rise of the Maratha Power*.

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\* A more detailed Bibliography will be found in the author's *Mughal Empire in India*.



RAWLINSON : *Shivāji the Maratha.*

RUSHBROOK WILLIAMS : *An Empire-BUILDER of the Sixteenth Century.*

SARDESAI : *The Main Currents of Maratha History.*

SARKAR : *Fall of the Mughal Empire* (2 vols.) ; *History of Aurangzib* (5 vols) ; *Mughal Administration* ; *Shivāji* ; *Studies in Mughal India.*

SAXENA : *Shah Jahan of Dīlhi.*

SEN : *Foreign Biographies of Shivāji.*

SHARMA : *Mughal Empire in India* (3 Parts).

SHARP : *Delhi.*

SINHA : *Rise of the Peshwas.*

SMITH : *Akbar the Great Mogul* ; *Oxford History of India.*

TARACHAND : *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture.*

THOMAS : *The Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi* ; *Revenue Resources of the Mughal Empire in India.*

TITUS : *Indian Islam.*

TOD : *The Annals and Antiquities of Rājasthān.*

TRIPATHI : *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration.*

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